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A Third Person.

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Author of "PROPER PRIDE," "DIANA BARRINGTON," "TWO MASTERS,"
"INTERFERENCE," "A FAMILY LIKENESS," etc., etc.

CHAPTER IV.

MRS. BAGGOT'S BENEVOLENT FUND.

MAJOR-GENERAL YALDWIN took an early opportunity of calling on his neighbour's nephew. He watched this, to him, most interesting individual enter the house—which is one of the advantages derived from a semi-detached residence—and soon afterwards might be seen stalking up the gravel path which led to No. 15, wearing a beautiful pair of shiny boots and his well-brushed club hat.

The general enjoyed his visit immensely. Here was a man with whom he could discuss familiar scenes, and all the latest army news—the new rifle, new drill, recent royal warrants. When he had bemoaned Jones' promotion as a fatal mistake ; heard how Smith, the son of Black Smith, had bolted with the title deeds of his father's property, and pawned and lost the proceeds at Monte Carlo ; had given his opinion of the Trans-Caspian railway and the last little frontier war, he suddenly said :

"By the way, Hope, are you anything of a Philatelist ?"

The young man looked rather blank. As far as he knew he had never heard the word in his life. Was it a science, or a game—or could the general mean philanthropist ? Silence was golden in this instance, he felt confident. So he merely replied by shaking his head in humble ignorance.

"You are not a Philatelist, then ! I am sorry for you. Do you

really mean to tell me that you take *no* interest in foreign postage stamps?" demanded the general rather sharply.

"I must honestly confess that I do *not*," replied the other boldly. He was not going to be bullied even by General Yaldwin.

The visitor raised his bushy eyebrows, and exclaimed, "It is a matter of considerable attraction for me. I go in for foreign stamps heart and soul, and I have a most rare and valuable collection."

Mrs. Baggot winked expressively, but secretly, at her nephew and said, "Yes, a magnificent collection. You ought to see it, Roger. Mr. Wapshott, too, is another enthusiast, but he has not got nearly as many rare stamps as the general."

"No, no," acquiesced that gentleman complacently. "A very cheap ordinary lot, such as a schoolboy would have, all except one, and that really *is* a gem. I'd give almost anything in reason for it or its fellow. Indeed, I actually went so far as to offer him fifteen pounds for it, and he had the insolence to laugh in my face. I allude to the blue Natal ninepenny issue of 1857."

"Oh, indeed," rejoined Roger with becoming gravity. "I am miserably ignorant on the subject."

"But you need not remain so, my good fellow," cried the general with unexpected warmth. "Come to me, and I'll post you up in stamps. No, my dear madam," waving his hand at Mrs. Baggot, "it is not a pun. Come in any time you like—say to-morrow afternoon at three o'clock—and I will show you one of the finest collections in England—no trash."

"I shall be delighted," returned Roger the hypocrite. But he had been brought up to fear, revere and respect generals; and there was an air of command about this old soldier that was simply irresistible.

"Well, Roger," said his aunt, as she watched the parting guest stiffly descend the steps, "your friends would say you were hard up for amusement, if they heard the gusto with which you snatched at an old fogey's invitation to look at some trumpery stamps. However, you are stuck fast here for the next ten days, and must make the best of it. You are engaged to two dinner parties and three dances, and if you attempt to get out of them *my* blood will be upon your head! I have promised for you—you will have to wait until Clara comes home. I wonder if you

will be very much bored next door," and her eyes twinkled mischievously.

"Oh! I don't suppose I shall. I won't stay long, you know."

"My poor, dear, innocent boy! He has seven thousand stamps, and you will have to give your opinion of each individually."

"Oh! I say," protested the young man, "if he lets me in like that, I shall feign illness."

"It will be your only chance," was the cheerful response. "It is a fatal mistake to exhibit the smallest interest in his craze; you will be bothered out of your senses, and given commissions, and samples to exchange in your regiment, and I don't know what not. He has had the stamp mania for the last six years, and takes everything connected with it most seriously."

"Well, at any rate, it keeps him occupied, and is harmless and cheap," said Roger tolerantly. "He may find it a healthy mental excitement; at any rate it is less expensive than betting or building, or gambling on the Stock Exchange."

"It is by no means so *cheap* as you imagine. He spends a small fortune on rare specimens, and will fly up to London to look at a stamp far sooner than to meet an old friend. To me it would be amusing, if it was not pitiful, to see a man who once commanded a division, and was a distinguished soldier, coming down to pasting bits of dirty coloured paper into a book; he has actually compiled a catalogue, and contributes long articles to some stamp magazines. Mr. Wapshott is his hated rival, and if you praise his specimens you are lost, as far as the general's good opinion goes, and his one thorn in the flesh is that unattainable stamp. I believe he offered two hundred and fifty pounds for it, and his enemy snapped his fingers under his fine old hooked nose!"

"I have heard people say that the general had a wonderful good collection," remarked Annie, in her prim level voice, "and that it is worth several thousand pounds."

"Very possibly!" replied her mother. "At any rate he prizes it above rubies. What a chance for that girl! If I were Rose Yaldwin, I would promptly avenge myself for years of petty persecution and misery, by one day consigning the whole precious collection to the flames. Yes, duplicates and all!"

Roger laughed, but Miss Baggot took the matter more seriously.

"Good gracious, mother!" she gasped, "what *will* you say

next? I trust that you will never put such an awful idea into the girl's head; for if she were to do such a thing as destroy his stamps, the general would kill her in his rage. I don't think you know what his rages are?"

"Oh, pardon me, I do; you forget that I was present—at least, thank goodness, the railings were between us—the day he discovered Banks the gardener digging up all his precious Indian seeds. You need not be alarmed, there will be no murder done next door, as far as I can prevent it; and there is no fear of Rose. She never could bring herself to commit such a desperate crime. I had always a spice of the devil in me, and she has not."

"I would not be so sure of that, mother," retorted Annie; "you should have seen her eyes one day when the general kicked her little dog."

"You mean that vagabond mongrel she got leave to take in?"

"Yes; she loves him as if he were a human being."

"She might well do *that*," assented Mrs. Baggot. "She has not many human beings to love, and I doubt if a single creature in the world loves her."

"Oh, mother! you really do say very shocking things," expostulated her offspring. "Surely her grandfather and grandmother—"

"Annie, you are talking nonsense, and you know it," interrupted Mrs. Baggot impatiently.

"Mrs. Yaldwin, poor soul, is past the stage of loving anything but her bed, and her dinner. The general—the idea of connecting him with the word 'love' is ridiculous. If he loves any object under heaven it is a dirty, gummy little scrap of paper—his rare and most precious darling, that apple of his eye, and comfort of his declining years—an old Finland stamp. If it came to a charitable collection, I am certain we could honestly subscribe far more affection here than is felt for Rose next door. I like her, indeed I am fond of her. You like her, Annie; and Roger"—with a sly glance at her nephew—"will add a small donation?"

"Yes; you may put me down for a liberal contribution," returned Roger with unexpected generosity. "I wish it was as easy to subscribe to other benevolent demands."

CHAPTER V.

THE MINAR GETS INTO DISGRACE.

PUNCTUALLY at three o'clock the following day, Captain Hope placed his hand on Mrs. Yaldwin's visitors' bell, and rang a steady peal. He was presently admitted by the cast-iron butler, who had private soldier and officer's servant stamped on his carriage and address. The hall was severely tidy—sticks and umbrellas were arranged like stands of arms in a barrack room ; whilst the drawing-room, a stern grey apartment, presented a certain resemblance to the general himself—it was stiff, the walls were leaden-colour, and their only ornament a half-length painting of the master of the house in full uniform, and a few military sketches suspended at intervals with military precision ; each chair and table was drawn up in its exact place as if, so to speak, on parade. Close to the window was seated the old lady with a knitted shawl over her shoulders, intent on playing, " Beggar my neighbour " with her grand-daughter.

" You always get all the knaves, I never have a chance," she was saying in a shrill, querulous voice as Leach announced " Captain Hope."

Miss Yaldwin rose, bowed, and blushed, but remained dumb.

" Who is it, Rose ? " inquired her grandmother, screwing up her eyes ; " the young man about the clocks ? Why does Leach show him in here ? Tell him to sit in the hall."

" Grandmamma," said the girl, hastily applying her lips to the ear-trumpet, " it is Captain Hope, Mrs. Baggot's nephew."

" The Pope sent a parrot to *who's* nephew ? " shrieked the deaf lady, who, when she did not quite catch a sentence, took a perverse delight in assuming that it was ridiculous.

" Mrs. Baggot's nephew ! " reiterated the girl with laboured distinctness.

" Oh, oh, indeed ! " nodding affably to Roger. " Glad to see you," she chirruped. " We never have young men calling now since Jane was married ; there is no inducement, and I did not understand, for I'm rather near-sighted and a little hard of hearing"—putting up her ear-trumpet expectantly—" Eh ! what did you say ? "

In point of fact he had not opened his lips, but he now, like

an inexperienced operator, bawled into the trumpet as if he was drilling a battalion, "It's a beautiful day?"

Mrs. Yaldwin almost leapt into the air.

"You must not raise your voice," explained Rose; "it frightens her."

"I am awfully sorry; what on earth am I to do?"

"Tell her so—but in your usual voice."

After a most ample apology had been poured into the ear-trumpet, he turned to the younger lady and said:

"Your grandfather has invited me in to see his foreign stamps—I believe he has a wonderful collection."

"Yes," rather timidly; "he is very proud of it. He will be here immediately." Then ensued a silence. After casting about in his mind for some appropriate topic, Roger noticed a small, short-haired grey terrier looking at him with wistful brown eyes, as much as to say, "I wonder if you are a friend or not?"

"Is this your dog?" snapping his fingers, as a signal of good will.

"Yes; I have had him about three months."

"He is a pretty little fellow, but has rather a cowed, frightened look."

"He was a lost dog, and perhaps that accounts for it. I noticed him several days running up and down beside a tram which passes near here. His master must have got out and forgotten him, and the poor dog kept faithfully with the tram for two days, and then he was very weak and starved, and I saw him lying near the wall—by the gate, and some boys took him and were carrying him off to drown him, and I ran out and bought him for sixpence."

She paused abruptly, as if rather ashamed of having said so much.

She was certainly an uncommonly pretty girl, thought Roger, as he stroked the dog's head and listened to his history; how her colour went and came—what eyelashes and eyes—and even her shabby black dress became her to perfection. She was remarkably fair to look upon—and very shy.

"And what do you call your purchase?" he asked.

"I call him Jack. I tried a great many names and he seemed to know that."

Another interval, and then Roger opened a new subject:

"Do you ever play tennis?" he inquired.

"Go to the devil," shouted a loud gruff voice—the voice of General Yaldwin. Captain Hope started, looked round and noticed close behind him, in a cage, a Hill Minar, with its glossy black coat, yellow ears and bill, and impudent eye—a familiar Indian bird.

"Does he generally join in the conversation?" he asked, after a momentary pause.

"I am sorry to say he does," admitted Rose, with a smile. "He talks a great deal too much, and imitates everything he hears—and—"

She was rudely interrupted by the sound of a smacking kiss, and an agonized treble saying: "Thomas! I'll tell the master."

"Have you had him long?" continued Roger, with a desperate effort to preserve his gravity.

"Grandpapa has had him for years; he brought him from India and is very fond of him, though sometimes he says he will give him away."

"Do you care for birds?"

"I'm not sure—I don't know much about them."

"Idiot!" exclaimed the minar in an angry key; "idiot!—get out of my sight."

"I can't say much for the manners of this specimen," remarked Roger; "otherwise he would be invaluable at a dinner party to fill up long conversational gaps—"; he stopped confusedly as he suddenly realized the fact that the minar had rather distinguished himself in this line, on the present occasion.

"Please, would you mind talking to grandmamma," urged Miss Yaldwin timidly; "you see she is holding up her trumpet."

Captain Hope instantly obeyed; putting his lips to the instrument, he said:

"You seem to have a wonderful bird here, ma'm."

"Wonderful girl! oh! she's not bad as girls go; she might be worse and she might be better, girls are a horrible responsibility; but I must say Rose gives no trouble."

"Idle, insolent, underhand hussy!" shrieked the fatal bird, then coughed and expectorated: "You deserve to starve, miss—to starve—"; putting his head close to the bars, he gobbled incoherently about "temper, devils, blazes and hell," and finally screamed: "Go to your room—go to your room!"

"Cholum!" exclaimed his victim rising, in great confusion, "you are too tiresome and this is one of your bad days; I shall have to take you away. Strange voices always upset him," she explained to the visitor apologetically, as she took him down. Roger politely relieved her of the cage, and whilst he bore him out of the room the irrepressible minar repeated:

"Idle, scheming, lying minx! go to the devil, get out of my sight," and then he mimicked Rose's clear voice:

"Coming, coming, grandpapa."

Just as the little procession reached the door, it was flung wide open by the general himself.

"Oh, Hope; how d'ye do?" he said genially. "I am sorry I have been detained, but I was just finishing an article on early Roumanian issues, for this afternoon's post. This rascal been at his old tricks, eh? It's lucky he talks Hindostani, isn't it? Some of his remarks are not fit for ears polite."

(Roger wished from the bottom of his heart, that the bird *had* confined himself to a foreign tongue.)

"Just put him on the table like a good fellow, and he will be choop enough; he hates the hall," continued the master of the house. "He is a valuable specimen. I got him from Nepaul. He has the most human voice I ever heard. My bearer used to say he was the evil spirit of some sahib, and I have often felt tempted to wring his neck, only he is an old friend and an amusing beggar. Well, come along now and make up for lost time," and he hurried him into his sanctum. The study was a primly luxurious room with easy-chairs, book-cases, a turkey carpet and fine writing table; there were a few maps and old Indian arms arranged upon the walls, and in the corner stood a large glass cupboard in which Roger's keen eye detected rows of glossy hats. A special table was entirely dedicated to stamps; there were scissors, gum pots, and piles of books and magazines. "This is my Album number one," said the general, seating himself with a happy sigh, and watching his visitor into a chair; "I compiled it myself," proudly displaying an enormous leather portfolio.

There were evidently three other volumes crammed full, and Roger's heart failed within him, for he could see that his host intended to fulfil his promise most conscientiously, and to post him up thoroughly, as he had threatened.

"Now let us commence," said General Yaldwin. "Bring your

chair up, so that we can hold the book comfortably between us. Before proceeding to examine it, I should make you acquainted with a few facts, and explain several small but important matters. I suppose you know nothing of water marks?"

"Nothing," repeated the visitor in a hopeless voice.

"It is an essential subject in stamp collecting. Each country has a different sign. England has a crown, India an elephant's head, Egypt a pyramid, Naples a *fleur-de-lis*, and so on. Then perforation. Have you any knowledge of *that*?"

As Roger expressed absolute ignorance, the general made the most of the occasion, and held forth on ordinary and roulette perforation for the space of ten minutes. At last he evidently considered his pupil sufficiently qualified to gaze upon his treasures, and opening the album he said, in the voice of a man delivering a lecture, "I begin, as you perceive, with Mulready's blue envelope, on Indian paper—*very* rare, the ordinary ones are common; I believe you can get one for twenty-five shillings, a black and blue one, of course. Here," indicating with a well-trimmed fingernail, "is one of the very first penny stamps ever issued; I got it quite by chance in an old ironmonger's shop in Worthing." Yes, it was plain that he was going to do, and did do, his worst; he was about to retail at length how he had become possessed of each treasure, and what he had paid for it; no information would be withheld.

By the time that they were half through the first volume Roger was in despair, and his brain in a whirl of American and Australian first issues, perforations, water marks and roulettes. He could not stand it any longer; pushing back his chair, he rose and said:

"Thank you so much; I'm afraid I have paid you a visitation, I must really not trespass on your time any longer."

"Bless my soul! you mustn't go yet!" remonstrated the general. "Why, I've scarcely begun; you've not seen the best ones, they are in the third book and I'm keeping them as a *bonne bouche*; you've not seen my Finland stamp with the serpentine perforation!"

"Thank you, another time—another day," rejoined the unhappy young man, "I have an engagement. I am going out to ride at half-past four; they keep very good nags at the 'Harp.'"

"Going out to ride!" echoed the other, as he reluctantly shut

the book. "Won't you find that dull work—all alone? You ought to wait till you know people, and escort some lady, eh?"

"I am going out with my aunt."

"Bless my soul and body!" exclaimed the general. "Ah, well, I need not be surprised. She is a remarkable woman, and used to sit her horse capitally, and was well up in all the paper chases, in days gone by."

"I am glad to hear you say so, sir," remarked her nephew in a tone of relief, "for she has ordered up a mare known as the Kicker."

"I am not surprised; that woman is afraid of nothing. She has not ridden for some time, but I saw her on a tricycle last summer—between you and me," dropping his voice to a confidential key. "The daughters did not like it. Oh, she is a marvellous person! Would you suppose that she is only a couple of years younger than Mrs. Yaldwin? She has extraordinary spirit and vitality. Well," rising as he spoke, "you must come into the drawing-room and have a cup of tea. The horses have not arrived yet, and I know Mrs. Baggot takes a good while to put on her accoutrements. You will see a complete transformation," and he grinned sardonically.

As the general and his visitor were about to rejoin the ladies, the visitor was favoured with a glimpse of his host's redoubtable temper—just one short but volcanic explosion. In crossing the hall, they roused up the irrepressible minar. He was evidently nursing his wrongs, as he rocked himself sullenly to and fro on his perch. Putting his head on one side, as he despaired his master, he bawled :

"Beggar—pauper—devil! Get out of my sight!"

The general's face became instantly charged with fury, and with a muttered oath he dashed at the culprit and shook his cage violently, saying between his clenched teeth, "You mind yourself, you infernal nuisance, or I'll kick you downstairs, as I did the other day, cage and all."

The minar simply yawned, scratched his ear comfortably with his left leg, and made no reply.

"Upon my honour, Hope, I often feel inclined to *roast* that bird!" said the general, who was evidently a little ashamed of his outbreak. "But you don't know the provocation he gives me; he is enough to drive a man wild." He turned round and glared

fiercely at the minar, who remained dumb, and was apparently buried in his own reflections, perhaps thinking of his native hills, his family home in far Nepaul—and a certain delicious little patch of wild raspberries?

"He is choop enough now, he is afraid of me," boasted his master triumphantly, as he turned to open the drawing-room door. Ere they entered, Roger distinctly heard the minar exclaim, in the shrill accents of an impudent street *gamin*:

"Gunpowder Yaldwin! Gunpowder Yaldwin!"

Fortunately for him, the general's hearing was not what it once had been, and therefore the insult passed unnoticed.

The tea-table was spread, and Captain Hope seated himself beside it, and gladly accepted a cup from Miss Yaldwin's fair hands. He watched her dainty fingers wielding sugar-tongs and buttering scones for her grandmother, and not forgetting to administer tit-bits to Jacky.

"I'm sure he has been accustomed to good society," observed Rose, as she caught the young man's eye. "He is so punctual at afternoon tea."

"Yes," assented her grandfather, "and he has been accustomed to be severely washed and scrubbed, for you have only to mention one word—the word *bath*, and he tears away to hide; look at him now." Jacky, with his tail abjectly lowered, was already at the door.

"Poor Jacky!" called his mistress soothingly. "It's all right, it's not Saturday. Come along and finish your scone. Even on hearing the word in casual conversation," she explained, "and having no reference to him, he flies; and when I want to get rid of him, instead of saying 'Go out, Jacky,' I simply look at him and say 'bath,' and he vanishes."

"It's his sole accomplishment, and speaks volumes for his habits," sneered the general, who was sipping hot water. "This is a fine thing for the digestion, Hope. I strongly recommend hot water."

"Thank you, sir, but all my life I have been striving to keep out of it."

"I daresay, and found it easy enough; nowadays discipline is so slack, commanding officers funk responsibility, and are little better than sergeant-majors, or orderly room clerks. The fellow who succeeded me in command, was never happy away

from his official forms and red ink bottle, and his whole interest was centred in the men's socks and the regimental bakery. In my day we thought of other things," and he gave an involuntary glance at his own portrait.

Yes, it flattered him unmistakably, he did not look nearly as lantern-jawed and grey as he actually was—he wore full uniform, his hand was on his sword, and his breast was covered with medals. "Well, there could be no flattering about *them*," said Roger to himself.

"Did you see the case in the White Cockades the other day?" resumed the old gentleman. "By George, I'd have broken him if he had been under me, a rank scrim shanker."

"Yes, but as a rule the days of the Queen's bad bargains are at an end," remarked the officer. "We serve the Empress in many capacities and are kept pretty busy."

"I don't know about that."

"But I do," said Captain Hope stoutly. "This year my regiment was split up—half on the plains and half on the hills; and what with officers sick, at classes, or on leave, we were—and indeed it was our normal state—uncommonly short-handed."

"What do you call short-handed?" snarled the old soldier.

"Well, at one time I was president of one court-martial, prosecutor in another, besides commanding my company; I had charge of the paymastership, printing press, mess and coffee shop."

"You must be a smart fellow if you kept your head among all that," remarked the general.

"Oh, I worried along somehow. I did not mind anything, but being paymaster, I was always afraid of muddling the accounts, and getting into some awful scrape with the regimental funds."

Before the words were out of his mouth, Captain Hope saw that he had said the wrong thing—or as he mentally expressed it, put his foot in it somewhere. The general's face became rigid, and Rose's the colour of her name, and with the preternatural and inconvenient sharpness of deaf people, Mrs. Yaldwin divined that something was amiss. "What is it?" she demanded in her cracked voice. "What has he been saying?" eagerly tendering her trumpet to Rose.

Roger precipitately seized upon it and shouted into it: "I

was only telling the general how hard we were worked sometimes."

"My good young man, you will certainly break the drum of my ear!" she protested peevishly. "As to your being hard worked, I don't believe one word of it, not one word!" This little scene, happily bridged over the previous awful silence, and the general, who had now recovered from whatever had disturbed him, resumed the talk about "shop."

Meanwhile the visitor watched his granddaughter narrowly, whilst the old lady mumbled to herself and soaked bread in her tea, and the old gentleman delivered a long monologue on Russia's dangerous activity in Asia, and the possibility of an advance on Mershad or Herat. She was knitting a black silk sock—how he wished it was for him! What small hands she had!—he liked to follow her fingers twinkling in and out among the needles; her eyes were cast down, her lashes swept her cheeks, her face was thin and sad; from his heart he pitied her—this girl who was passing the spring of her days, her youth, that never would come back—the very best of her life—bound hand and foot to these two old people. *Why* should he be so sorry for her? as Annie had inquired. Would he have been equally interested if she had had a pasty face and turned-up nose? He was almost afraid to ask himself the question.

"It is twenty minutes past four," he said, looking at his watch and rising, "I must be off."

"He is going to ride with his aunt," explained the general, down the ear-trumpet. "What do you say to that, Sara?"

"To hide with his aunt?" she screamed, and a flash of happy expectancy suddenly shone in her dull old eyes. "Why, what has she been doing *now*?"

"*Ride!*" he roared. "Ride, I said. I declare she gets deafer every day."

"Oh!" in a key of intense disappointment, "you don't say so! Providence is very good to some people. She is a wonder, only four years younger than I am, and she rides on horseback and I go in a bath-chair—and only four years between us!"

Mrs. Yaldwin was much too fond of repeating this intelligence, to please her volatile and robust contemporary, and the worst of it was, that it was true.

"You will come in again, and we will go on with the stamps?"

said the general hospitably. "Come some morning before twelve, I want to show you my rare Finland specimen and others."

Roger glanced swiftly at Miss Yaldwin, and declared that nothing would give him greater pleasure.

"Ah," said his host escorting him to the hall door, "if I only had a Blue Natal of '57 to exhibit, my ambition would be fulfilled."

A Blue Natal stamp! a little square of soiled paper, the crowning point of a man's existence; and this man had been distinguished, had had a career out in the world, had led men bravely and worn some hard-won laurels, had gained honours, decorations and fame—and now his horizon was changed; he no longer saw a V.C. dangling before his eyes—all his yearnings pointed to a Blue Natal stamp.

(To be continued.)

Three Days Surrounded by Icebergs.

[Gleanings from a Girl's Diary of a Voyage from New Zealand to England, in 1863.]

YES, I am on board. "I," my individual self. The last "good-byes" are over, and my heart didn't break. No, but I have been leaning over the ship's side, wondering—shall I ever be happy again? Farewells are at all times sad, but I am leaving "my people" in troublous times, for the Maori war is to be renewed; the father is ordered back to his post (Taranaki) as superintending medical officer; "the boys" will be scattered. It was thought wise that a long-standing invitation from a much-loved aunt should at last be accepted, and then I was fast becoming an invalid. "Shaken nerves," said the father. "A long sea voyage was the one thing to put me right." I was leaving, feeling so disappointed. What had New Zealand brought us during our four years and a half of residence there? Little else but sorrow. The mother dead, property gone, painful memories of the wretched war. We were staying in Auckland when the clipper ship "Ida Zeigler" was chartered home to carry troops, invalid soldiers and discharged men. Friends of ours were leaving in her, and I had many offers of chaperonage. A girl friend and I are to share the same cabin. We sailed on the 5th of February with a favourable wind at about mid-day. Great anxiety was felt in the morning that the vessel would be detained in harbour, owing to some misunderstanding with the sailors, more than half refusing to work just at the last moment. The crew was a hastily collected one; "gold mine fever" was at its height in the north of New Zealand, and the original hands had decamped one fine night! A regular mutiny broke out. The captain went on shore to consult with a magistrate, and sent a party of policemen on board to keep order. In the meantime the pilot proposed to guide the ship to the "Heads," working her with whatever hands he could get, as it was hoped the captain would be able to arrange matters satisfactorily. About noon the captain

arrived, a court was called, and we were very thankful to hear of promised quiet amongst the sailors, the captain guaranteeing that no notice of their former conduct should be taken in England. Affairs now looked brighter, and after bidding "good-bye" to the pilot, we felt we were really on our way. With great interest we watched the shores of New Zealand as its different objects disappeared from sight. To many of us this is our final leave-taking.

6th. The wind is favourable. We are still in sight of land, passing between Cape Coleville and the Great Barrier. To-day every one is busy making arrangements in their cabins, securing boxes, &c., while in the saloon the noise and bustle was quite confusing.

7th. To-day there is far more regularity. We seem growing more accustomed to our new home; places at the table are arranged for every one, which prevents confusion. We are now rounding the East Cape, and shall soon be out of sight of land. We have been also able to ascertain the number of saloon passengers, amounting to thirty-two.

8th (Sunday). We have rounded the East Cape to-day and have now lost sight of land, probably for three long weary months. How difficult it is to realize that to-day is Sunday. The weather being rough, no regular service will be held.

9th. We are to count two Mondays, as we are now in West longitude. The nights are so beautifully clear and starlight, and the weather so mild, that we are loth to leave the deck. How wearisome and monotonous a sea voyage is! So little to interest and amuse, and most of the ladies are suffering from sea-sickness but, I hope, not in its worst form.

10th. We have commenced practising singing to-day, in the hopes of getting up a concert shortly, Mr. G., one of the band-masters, acting as instructor. This whiled away an hour or two. In the afternoon our attention was attracted, by observing a great quantity of porpoises, "black bottle-nosed," as Captain R. called them.

11th. This has been a most melancholy day. Captain B., of the 65th, died suddenly early this morning. No one can describe the gloom which has overspread the ship. He has left a wife and two children. In the evening the burial service was performed, and a more impressive sight I never saw. Poor Mrs. B.

and the children were present. How my heart ached for her, so suddenly widowed. Every one was touched. Captain B. was an agreeable, kind-hearted man.

13th. One of the intermediate passenger's children died and was buried to-day. The weather is getting very cold and damp, the nights closing in with a fog. We cannot sit for long together on deck and are obliged to find amusement below.

14th. This we are keeping as "Valentine's Day." We are like "Drowning men catching at a straw." Anything that falls in our way that we fancy will afford amusement is eagerly sought after. This afternoon I had a long conversation with Mr. J., who with five others are embarked in a speculation, which I hope will succeed. They are taking fourteen natives to England. Out of this number a few are women, the men are principally chiefs. Their object is to show these natives our different dock-yards, arsenals, &c., to give them a thorough notion of England, and also to exhibit them in the different towns through which they may pass. Mr. J. hopes to see the natives safely back in about two years, both morally and intellectually improved, so that they will prove a benefit to their tribes and raise *their* ideas of the English. They have met with trouble thus early; one of the women of their party has gone raving mad. It is supposed this ~~is~~ owing to the excitement of leaving, and the great difference on board ship to their way of life. She is quite unmanageable, and has to be manacled and lashed down. She broke into the married women's apartment between the decks one night, and pinched some of them black and blue.

15th (Sunday). It is very rough and blowy to-day, and many who were fast recovering from sea-sickness in the last two or three days' comparative calm are again ill. We are damped also with the knowledge that the wind is dead against us. A short service was held, however, but there was a very small attendance.

16th. Another death! One of the invalid soldiers died last night, and will be buried this evening. The poor fellow was in the last stage of consumption. The hospitals in Auckland are overcrowded, but still I think he might have been left behind to die in peace. A birth took place last night—the wife of one of the soldiers: she is very well, poor thing. The wind is still foul, and the ship is lying over very much. It is difficult to walk. The "Ida Zeigler" is a wonderfully easy ship, rolling far less

than the generality of vessels ; but still, strange mishaps occur, and very laughable ones. At one half of the table there are no regular secured seats with backs, but chairs are used, and these are lashed in ; but if the sails are shifted so that the vessel leans over on the contrary side, the effect is ludicrous in the extreme, every one flying back as if by an electric shock. The vessel rolls so to-day, it is impossible to keep the things steady on the table. I have omitted mentioning that we have thirteen children in the saloon ; the bell for the various meals seems to be ringing almost all day. I feel quite glad there are children : they are an interest and amusement to me. To-day I have made a proposition to the respective mothers to let the elder ones come to daily lessons with me ; I am really "*ennui-ed*" for the want of something to do. I can't read and study all day, and I want a cure for homesickness. And oh, how pleased both mothers and bairns are ! There is an amusing hunting up of books, while I am writing a programme of proposed studies, and feel quite elated at the bright kind looks given. If the little ones don't disturb us, I promise to tell tales at the close of our hour's work, and promise that all shall come to me on Sunday for a Sunday school.

20th. We have had a very stormy night, the wind blowing in the right direction until between three and four in the morning, when it suddenly chopped round, driving her stern way. All was now commotion and bustle : the captain, mates and sailors rushing on deck ; all the sails were taken in. Owing to some mismanagement, the man at the wheel broke his arm ; in the general uproar, it was some time before the poor fellow made himself heard. Many of the passengers turned out in alarm. It was a general belief that we had struck upon an iceberg. The sudden jar and shake caused a thorough fright. Very few ladies appeared at the breakfast table. The day was one of the most uncomfortable I have ever experienced. Few could boast of dry cabins or dry berths, and the saloon was so dark, cold and cheerless. Until about two o'clock we were under close reefed topsails, and merely driving before the wind.

21st. The gentlemen have introduced on the deck a game of quoits, and as the weather is now so much colder, the ladies have been induced to join.

22nd (Sunday). We had service in the saloon for the first time. Every day we feel it getting colder. We are progressing

now beautifully with a strong steady wind. It is astonishing how the fact that we are getting on raises the spirits of every one, the captain more especially. We even put up with the constant rolling; for it is constant now, the sea being rougher. We have discovered that the "Ida Zeigler" is a very leaky vessel, that is, in her decks; this makes it very cold and comfortless.

24th. About eleven o'clock this morning an iceberg was visible, which caused a general rush on deck. I think I never saw a greater excitement before, among the natives especially. Poor Mrs. B. left her cabin and seemed interested. We were not close enough to distinguish any variety of colours, but I think the shape most resembled a huge fortress. We were now nearing others, and the sun shining out lit up the masses in one-gleam of sunshine.

25th. We have had a miserably anxious night. The captain and mates kept watch all night. I took a last look at about twelve o'clock through the captain's night-glass, and could distinguish them all round us. We ran frightfully close to two before the watchers were aware of them, owing to a thick hazy mist which had set in. The ship's course was altered every ten minutes to steer through them. At one time the order was, "Hard up with the helm!" then, "Down with the helm!" "Luff a little!" "No more off!" and then came the "Steady!" which seemed no sooner said than one of the former cries was repeated. Most grateful were we for the break of day, and still more so to hear that we were clearer of icebergs; but how short-lived was this feeling of satisfaction! About noon we were literally *surrounded by them*. It is impossible to describe the sight. No one had ever seen so many, or had ever imagined we should pass such numbers. There seemed to be no passage out of them. As soon as we cleared through one opening, others loomed in the distance. One of the mates stood on the forecastle to look out, while the first mate stood half way up the rigging examining with a glass. No one was allowed to stand on the starboard side of the poop, so as not to intercept the lookout of the men at the wheel. The most stout-hearted of us felt a *sickening* feeling of fear, and *can it be wondered at?* We passed *very, very* close to many, and the sea was covered with large floating masses, some passing only a few yards from us. Some of the icebergs appeared as high as our ship's masts; they

looked frosted over like the icing of a wedding cake. The sea close to was of a brilliant blue colour. Many were covered on the top with loose blocks of ice, which in the distance very much resembled animals. But it is impossible to describe them. I longed for an artist's pencil, but even then, this would give but a faint idea. The colour of some was most brilliant, having different shades of blue and green. Icebergs travel at a mile and a half an hour if the wind is favourable for them, but we were thankful it was not so.

26th. Another anxious night. The captain hoped to have lain to, but the nearness of the ice rendered this impossible ; he said "he did not know for three minutes where we should be in the next three !" And so the day dragged on, and we shivered at the prospect of such another night. Captain B., in charge of the troops on board, kept double sentries to prevent a rush in case of a fatal accident. We passengers were horrified to hear that we were to be locked up in our respective cabins, but, *vehemently protesting*, promising submissive quiet, were left alone. Many spent the night in the saloon. The mental agony of some was *fearful* to witness. Poor Captain B. quite broke down ; he laid his head on his arms and sobbed aloud. I said, "How is it that you, so renowned for bravery, should be so terribly shaken now?" He answered, "It is a different thing to face an enemy in hot blood, but to go down like rats—oh, God ! it is frightful ! "

27th. Every one looks dispirited this morning through anxiety and want of rest, but how *grateful* we feel that we are clearer of icebergs. We all crowded into the saloon for a general thanksgiving. I saw faces there whom I had never seen before at any service, and then we shook hands, many of us in, I suppose, a spirit of mutual congratulation. This is the captain's first sail round "The Horn," and he says he would not undertake it a second time for a thousand pounds, at least not in the spring, for although more favourable with regard to winds, it is the worst season for icebergs, as they are then loosening and floating in huge masses, as we saw them. We passed 500 miles of ice ; some of the blocks were probably 300 feet high.

28th. It has been snowing to-day, and we have gathered sufficient to have a snowballing match. The gentlemen have called this "leap year," owing to our gaining a day, and have been somewhat facetious about it.

March 1st (Sunday). This has been a miserable day, so rough and cold that few ladies ventured out of their cabins, and no service was held.

2nd. Both the captain and first mate are confined to their beds, owing to very severe colds and sore throats, in consequence of their late exposure those terrible nights, with also the continual shouting. We have had another fall of snow, and the weather is still squally.

5th. We passed this morning at about eleven o'clock an English vessel bound for Valparaiso. Captain R. altered our ship's course to come up with her, but a mist gathering prevented signalling. This was a great disappointment to us all, but about noon we passed within a quarter of a mile of an American vessel, but so rapidly as only to allow of a few sentences being interchanged. During the day we passed two more ships, but both at a considerable distance from us. No landsman can tell what delight the signalling a vessel gives to those who have been any length of time at sea. We do not feel so lonely, and then to see fresh faces, what pleasure indescribable!

8th (Sunday). Last night at about twelve o'clock the walls of the store-room between decks gave way. The carpenter and crew were busy replacing and hammering until four o'clock this morning; added to this the vessel was rolling frightfully, so that sleep was out of the question. This morning the wind is still strong, and we are progressing splendidly.

11th. Another of the poor invalid soldiers is dead. I think it a sin to send men on board ship in a dying state; the cold and knocking about we have had must have been very distressing to them. This poor man sent for me to see him; he had known my father in the hospital, New Zealand, and spoke so affectionately of "the doctor." Poor fellow, he needed comforting. Strange, his chief fear was that his body would be eaten by sharks; they were round the vessel, and it required all my powers to point out how little need there was to care about the *body*. I stayed with him reading and talking until a few minutes before his death, until he was calm. We have a fair wind, which, if it continues, will bring us into warm weather in three days; already there is such a sensible difference in the temperature as to be quite delightful.

12th. There is a ship ahead of us, and we are gradually gain-

ing on her. A whale was seen this morning spouting not far off us. Another birth—the wife of one of the soldiers. Poor woman, she will be glad of the calm weather.

13th. We came up with the vessel at about nine o'clock last night, and were not more than a quarter of a mile off. As we neared her Captain R. ordered a blue light to be burned at the stern, which lit up our ship beautifully, dazzling us with its brilliancy. The questions are the same to almost every ship, commencing with "What ship's that?" "Where from?" "Where bound to?" "How many days out?" "How many passengers on board?" "What's your longitude?" &c., &c. The ship was named the "Empire," from Callao, bound for Hamburg, 47 days out. Their captain was very polite in his answers. In concluding, Captain R. wished him "A pleasant voyage," to which he replied, "Thank ye, sir; the same to you," and then we gave them three cheers, which were quickly responded to. It was delightful to hear them. We sent up a rocket on leaving, the first I have seen fired at sea. We are 37 days out, and are from a much longer distance; she is heavily laden, it is true, but still we felt proud at overtaking her—we must have been going two miles to her one. Their captain requested ours to report them. The wind is very foul, and we have been "bouting-ship" all day.

20th. This is a delightfully warm fine day, and we are all enjoying it, the more thoroughly as the last week has been one of the most stormy we have yet experienced. I had my first lesson in navigation this morning from the captain; he has formed a class good-naturedly.

24th. And now we are in "The Tropics," the heat almost unbearable. We are told it is the hottest time of year to be in "The Tropics" (March). Most of the gentlemen sleep on deck. A beautiful little bird was caught on the rigging to-day.

28th. There is something very delightful in the tropical nights. The sky is so clear with the moon shining in full brilliancy, while the decks are crowded with passengers, some dancing, some forming groups and singing, while others lie listlessly gazing at the lovely sky overhead studded with stars. "Surely God has made all things for us richly to enjoy!"

29th. Rain all day. The weather is oppressively hot, dull

and cloudy, with heavy showers ; the rain caused quite an excitement, every one contriving means to catch some ; our servants took care we were well supplied. A soft water bath is quite a luxury on shipboard.

31st. Sighted land, the Brazil coast ; two vessels in sight.

April 1st. Tacking all day, land visible, there has been much merriment to-day, every one trying to keep up "Fools' Day."

3rd (Good Friday). Had service for the day ; land visible, Pernambuco, we are not more than 15 miles off. We have a foul wind blowing directly *in* shore ; at night we were far too near to be agreeable ; we could see the Pernambuco lights, which had a very pretty effect.

5th (Sunday). About noon a French barque neared us, and signalled "if we could spare any biscuits ?" A boat pushed off and reached us just at the close of the service. We supplied the barque liberally with biscuit, asking in return "if they could spare us any crockery ?" for our breakages had been great. Captain R. ordered a boat to be lowered ; there was a general rush for seats. Our boat returned laden with supplies of various kinds ; the incident threw a little spirit of animation amongst us, the first vessel boarded.

10th. A calm to-day, or rather we are drifting backwards, owing to the strong currents prevalent in these latitudes. A boat was lowered for amusement, and a party started for a row. On their return Mr. J. took his natives ; giving them their paddles, they threw themselves from the ship into the sea to reach the boat, and went through the most extraordinary antics in the water, diving under the boat, &c. At last they were all seated, and a very laughable sight it was to watch them ; one stood up to keep time, singing, swaying his body backwards and forwards ; every now and then they left off, and springing up, waved their paddles in the air, singing and dancing part of their war dance. We cheered from the vessel, which much delighted them. As the boat neared, the natives leapt one by one into the sea, bounding over like cats. No sooner were all safely on board, than to our horror appeared several sharks, hideous monsters. This will naturally frighten the bathers from trying the sea again.

11th. Came close to a vessel sighted yesterday ; a boat was

lowered before breakfast, and Mr. and Mrs. J. with a few others went in her, the Maories paddling. She was a Russian schooner from Rio to the Baltic, 33 days out. The captain spoke German, however, so they had no difficulty in conversing with him. Our passengers came back disappointed, they had hoped to have obtained some preserved fruits, but found she had none. They said "her decks were dreadfully dirty, and the captain looked so uncivil and morose, Mrs. J. would not venture on board." The day was so calm and the ladies so anxious for a row, that Captain R. agreed to go with us to board her a second time ; it was a very laughable sight, so many ladies lowered over the side, and took some time. Mr. and Mrs. W. took their guitars and enlivened us by playing ; the sun was *dreadfully* hot, umbrellas scarcely sheltering us. As we neared the schooner, our kind musicians played "The Russian National Hymn." The Russian captain received us kindly, and we soon had an explanation of his morose looks in the morning. He acknowledged that "he was terrified by the natives, he had never seen a Maori before, and their uncouth gestures and noises made him long for a breeze to fly from them." We laughed at his fears and were soon on the best of terms. He conducted us to his cabin, a funny little place, and treated the ladies to coffee, and the gentlemen to porter, apologized politely for his decks, which were smeared with tar. About five minutes after we were on board he brought out his wife's likeness, probably thinking the ladies were laying siege. I could not help laughing at the quick way in which he handed it to us all. Captain R. persuaded him to return to dinner ; he received every attention on board our vessel, and expressed himself much pleased. Before leaving Mr. J. ordered up the much-dreaded Maories in their native dress, and they danced their war-dance on the poop, and sang a welcome to the Russian captain. On the captain's return he sent back by our boat some spiced wine and coffee, and several bottles of seltzer-water.

15th. Crossed "The Line," hurrah ! and now we can begin to talk of getting *home*. At night some lighted boxes fitted with tarred rope were thrown overboard, and a blue light burned at the masthead. The gentlemen frequently collect in the saloon in the evenings and sing comic songs, and this night the singing was carried on with great spirit. Captain R. gave a champagne supper.

17th. Rather showery, but the wind is steady. We have at last got the "north-east trades." Hundreds of flying fish were seen to-day.

19th. The breeze has freshened, and we are getting on delightfully. The weather is not so hot, and we feel in good spirits, and are already talking of "dear old England!"

21st. Wind still strong and favourable. At night we saw a beautiful sight in the new moon, Venus appearing almost touching one point of her.

22nd. A ship in sight outward bound; Captain R. wished to catch her in order to obtain home news, but she bore off from us, after we had lost about eight miles in chase.

23rd. Sail in sight ahead of us; our wind is falling light, and we fear our "Trades" are over.

24th. Wind very light, almost becalmed, and the day very hot. Came up with the ship and sent a boat off before breakfast for some tongues and crockery; unfortunately the bottom of the basket containing the crockery came out, and most of the things were broken. In return we sent some biscuits and cheeses. Several ladies wished to go on board in the second boat, Miss J—— and I were of the number. The captain gave us a hearty welcome, and led us into the saloon, a prettily furnished room, and treated us to some Spanish figs and raisins with port and sweet wines.

25th. Becalmed. The brigantine boarded yesterday was close to us, visits were again interchanged; in the evening our ship gave an instrumental concert to amuse our guests. Our pleasant party was abruptly broken up, as there seemed a probability of a breeze rising, and both captains were anxious to take advantage of it. Some time elapsed before our boat returned, a breeze in the meantime had sprung up, and we felt glad of their safe arrival. We fired a rocket in passing the brigantine as a farewell salute. A slight accident occurred during the day which might have been attended with disastrous consequences; a piece of lighted paper was thrown overboard that had been used for lighting a pipe, this lodged in one of the cabin windows, setting fire to a towel put to dry; the whole room was filled with smoke before any one was aware of it. The very thought of a fire at sea is sickening in the extreme.

26th (Sunday). We have a pleasant breeze, but varying three

points from our proper course, still even a very foul wind is preferable to a dead calm. We have lost sight of the brigantine ; she was right astern of us early this morning. The "Ida Zeigler" is not to be outdone by any ship ! The captain is getting low-spirited at our lengthened voyage ; this is the longest he has ever made ; he says, "he has never been more tried with the winds." The same remarks have been made by every captain we have spoken with ; but when we think of our perils in the ice, and our safe delivery, we ought to be sincerely grateful and thankful !

27th. A great quantity of sea-weed is floating round us, and many of the passengers are busy collecting and pressing it. We are out of "The Tropics" now, and enjoy the change of climate.

28th. Wind very fair. We are now about eight hundred miles from "The Azores." In all probability we put in there for fresh provisions, and we are anticipating much pleasure from a few hours on shore.

29th. Wind still fair, but the weather is very unpleasant, cloudy and showery. Signalled a vessel ; this makes the forty-fifth vessel seen, we have spoken with nine and boarded four.

May 4th. A soldier died suddenly last night, poor fellow, so short a distance from home ! A large vessel in sight ; we boarded her for provisions ; sugar is especially wanted, principally for the children's use ; a large quantity has been consumed with lime-juice daily given out to the troops on board, and through some careless oversight, no separate allowance of sugar was provided. The "Netherby" could only spare us twenty pounds of sugar, but of other requisites a good supply. The children on board the "Ida" were much amused watching the gambols of a young elephant, the "Netherby" pet ; he was quite tame, and docile as a dog ; he was valued at £300. The "Netherby" was quite out of firewood, having even cut up a gun-carriage as a last resort. We sent them some spars, unfortunately two were lost in conveying them, the rope getting adrift. Some illustrated papers were sent us which caused not a little excitement.

5th. We prove a faster sailer than our friend, who is far behind us. The captain has determined now not to put into Floriez ("The Azores"). We have a fair wind for England and fear to lose it, and also hope to get sugar from any vessel we chance to come across. Two ships in sight ahead of us.

6th. The two vessels seen yesterday in sight this morning,

and three others also. One we signalled, the "Clara Wheeler," an American, from Simon's Town, Cape of Good Hope, to Liverpool, out fifty-seven days. Captain R—— lowered a boat in the hope of obtaining some sugar ; we were then a great distance from her, and feared the boat would never reach, but on a signal to that effect from our ship she hauled in for us. We got a small supply of sugar, but they were worse off than ourselves in general supplies. The captain had his wife and family on board with but two passengers. The captain's eldest child, a boy of about nine years old, and a wonderful precocious one, gave us a great deal of amusement by his witty remarks and questions (this was after the boat's return and our two vessels were close alongside). Mr. and Mrs. W—— played several airs, among them "Yankee Doodle." The little boy then asked for "God Save the Queen," then "Auld Lang Syne," and "Three Cheers for the Red, White and Blue," true politeness to us. On bidding farewell the American lowered his colours three times with hearty cheers, a compliment quickly returned by us. An interchange of rockets and blue lights succeeded, for it was then dusk, making quite an illumination.

7th. Wind fair and a delightful day. Some black whales spouting, and a sun-fish—the latter an ugly monster which floats on the surface in the sun—were seen round the ship this morning ; also a large shark about twenty-two feet in length.

9th. The wind turned foul last night, and still continues so ; this is *very* dispiriting.

10th (Sunday). Two ships in sight ; a boat was sent to board a Sardinia schooner to try and get provisions, for we have but six days' allowance on board for the "Cuddy," and the wind still keeps very foul. There has been great carelessness and mismanagement on the part of the head steward, to allow us to run so short, and not mentioning to the captain the state of affairs. While lying off the coast of Brazil we could easily have run into one of the ports, and gained a sufficient supply. Also many of the tins of preserved meat proved bad, and our remaining stock of biscuit uneatable, filled with maggots ; and we have no flour, so no bread ! Well, the schooner was boarded, and her captain sent us everything he could possibly spare ; we all felt very grateful ; he dined on board our ship.

11th. The wind turned fair this morning at about four. The

third mate was seized with a fit last night, and is suffering from great exhaustion this morning. A great number of porpoises were seen round the ship to-day.

12th. Wind fair and strong ; it was too cloudy during the day to take the sun, but, the night being clear, our latitude was taken from the north star. Came unpleasantly close to a ship at night, which caused us not a little alarm.

13th. A glorious day with a fair wind ! We trust to see land to-morrow early. Ah ! how thankful we feel at the prospect of so soon being *home* ; this is the longest voyage the "Ida" has ever made, and friends must be anxiously looking for her arrival. The anchor chain was hauled up this morning, a delightful sound to all of us. We have seen about eighteen ships to-day. This is a head wind for vessels beating out of Channel ; we passed very close to two, which we signalled ; they were labouring against the wind and rolling frightfully. The third mate is better and on duty again.

14th. Sighted the "Lizard lights" at four o'clock this morning, and off Plymouth at about eleven. We have been in a state of great and pleasurable excitement to-day. A pilot came on board from Plymouth, but the captain did not require one. A number of boats sailed alongside ; we procured some vegetables and fish from one of these. Several of our passengers took this opportunity of going on shore. We also sent a mail, with a telegram from the captain, as to the ship's whereabouts. The pilot brought several *Times* newspapers with him, which were eagerly read and commented on by all. We passed off Plymouth between fifty and sixty fishing boats—a very pretty sight, besides a number of vessels, some bearing out of the Channel, while others were homeward bound. The wind is blowing *very strong*, and the weather looks thick and threatening ; the wind is fair, however. We have missed the easterly winds, which the pilot told us have been blowing continually lately. It is preferable to beat about *outside* the Channel with these winds, and we feel thankful to have escaped them. Every one has been busy packing up to-day. I can scarcely realize the fact that we are so near *home* at last ; it seems like a strange dream from which there must soon be an awakening.

15th. Took a pilot on board at Dungeness at about 8 o'clock this morning. The weather was very cloudy and thick, with

cold drizzling rain, but cleared towards evening. This prevented our seeing the coast very distinctly. We "hove to" off Dover, and bade farewell to many of our passengers. They had a miserable sail, poor things, the sea was very rough. The mate and steward went on shore to procure provisions, for we had not another day's allowance on board, and we had been running up the Channel at fourteen knots an hour to reach Dover in time to get a dinner ; we nearly ran down a vessel in the night ! Only those who have been a long voyage can tell with what delight anything fresh from shore is welcomed. I cannot describe how we enjoyed the fruit, &c. The constant tacking, with the noise and excitement, reminded me of steering among the icebergs, but the feeling, *how different !* We anchored off Sheerness at ten at night. We hope to start again early to-morrow morning, and then, hurrah ! for Gravesend. A tug steamer was sent to meet us, and is waiting in readiness to tow us up. My mind feels quite oppressed with all I have seen to-day ; the feeling is indescribable—the number of ships in the Downs, the steamers, yachts, boats, &c. ; and at night the different lights all around, with the feeling that this is England, England at last ! after four years and a half's absence, makes me restless and excited to a degree. Hoisted a telegraph signal in "The Downs" when opposite the signal staff on shore, so that due notice has been given of our arrival. The tug has been on the look-out for us for more than twenty days, supposing our passage would not exceed seventy-five days. I omitted mentioning one amusing fact ; it is that about a week before we sighted land an old sow, who must have taken compassion on us, littered, poor thing. We ate all her young ones, and finished by demolishing her also.

16th. *Written on shore.*—We left Sheerness at four this morning. A strong east wind had set in, and we felt it bitterly cold. We were thankful we were so far up the Channel that this wind could not interfere with our progress. Every one rose very early, and eagerly watched the shores. We passed a large outward-bound vessel. Many of the passengers were on her decks, and they waved their handkerchiefs to us. How very different their feelings must have been to ours. *We* were weary travellers coming to rest, and *they* had all their sea troubles before them. About an hour after starting we were boarded by a boat full of

custom-house officers. I must mention, before these officers boarded us, minute inquiries were made as to the health on board ; the boat was vigorously pushed back upon hearing of the deaths, and it took both time and patience on the part of our doctor to explain that none were caused by infectious diseases. Then arrived packets of letters, amongst them one for me from my future home. It was some little time before I could read it, and then what a nervous weight its perusal took off my mind ; what a loving welcome was worded in that letter, also minute directions how to act so soon as we landed. We reached Gravesend at nine. A large vessel had just arrived before us from India with troops. The officers on board the "Ida" found they were personally acquainted with those on board the other vessel. Many of the officers came on board the "Ida" to breakfast. Miss T—— was feeling very low-spirited, not having received a letter, and I was endeavouring to cheer her, when a message came that she was wanted on the poop directly. Out she rushed, and came back with her mother, her face glowing. She left the ship at once. I felt very sad at parting with her, for we had been very happy together, but we hope to meet again, and intend to correspond. Poor Mrs. Captain B——, how I felt for her ! She had been busy writing notes, telling of her husband's death. One of her little boys cried to go with me, for at last my turn came to go.

When the last leave-takings came, it made one feel very sad ; the mind then recurs to all the pleasant incidents of a voyage, and we feel that that part of our lives is *past for ever*, and those who have endeared themselves to us, it may never be our lot to see again. My kind chaperons, Mr. and Mrs. H——, of Auckland, landed at Dover, with their little ones ; bidding them "good-bye" was a sharp pang in the number of partings. They hurried their landing, as their eldest child was very ill with ulcerated mouth, from want of pure milk and child's diet.

17th. Seaforth, near Liverpool. Yes, home at last. Never shall I forget the loving welcome. And, oh ! how much there seems to talk about. How grateful I am for the rest after the stormy "ups and downs" of the past four years—if only the dear father and the boys were here !—but I am determined to try and be as cheerful as possible, in return for all the loving care lavished on me.

LOUISA M. RAWSON-WALKER.

Poor "Number One."

By R. M. BURNAND.

CHAPTER I.

"LOOK here, you fellows ; we must give them a good beating this time to retrieve our lost fortunes," said Archie Blake, addressing his team as their opponents were driving up the ground. "Now, Number One, serious work ; go for them," and the captain of the Thirstone Polo Club gave a quizzical look at the man addressed as Number One, whose real name was Garry Hume. He was apparently watching something or somebody in the distance, but he turned at Blake's words.

"All right, old fellow. I'll ride 'em off and we will give it them hot this time," said Garry, in his pleasant cheery voice. He was not strictly good-looking, but a certain something in his face and manners made him a favourite with men and women ; of fairly good height, lightly made ; a clean shaven face, hair light brown ; his eyes were his best feature, of a greyish blue well shaded with dark lashes, while a very mischievous spirit lurked in their depths, which at times betrayed him ; but for all their mischief they were honest eyes and able to look the world very straight in the face.

"Oh, Garry is sure to distinguish himself," remarked Charlie Peters, another of the team, who bore no little jealousy to his more popular comrade. For although Peters was decidedly better-looking, his face lacked a good expression, and unconsciously Garry had often cut him out with the other sex, for Garry was a born flirt. He could no more help being "fetched," as he called it, by a pretty face than the loadstone resist the magnet. Somehow lately it was remarked that he seemed to be quieter than usual, and whether this slight change of demeanour was due to a certain pretty face, his friends were not quite sure. Many were of the opinion that Garry was at last really in love ; not that that was a new condition, but this seemed a different affair,

and one or two who knew him well thought it was serious, but the majority pooh-pooh'd such a notion. Was not one pretty face as good as another to Garry? As for himself, could he have heard the discussions about him, he would have scouted the idea as to his ever being serious about anything, especially in matters of love, for Garry loved his liberty, as he always laughingly put it when Blake used to chaff him on his butterfly propensities.

"Archie, I like them all. A pretty woman is a delight, but I have never yet seen the one who could charm me for long. I can't resist a good pair of eyes. Flirtation is the champagne of life; most women understand the game, and they know I am never in earnest except for the time being. Dear old chap, you can't fathom it; you take things too seriously."

"Yes, I am afraid I do. Still, take care, old fellow. You may make a mistake and your flirting may be taken as serious. For myself I could not tumble in and out of love as you do. You enjoy life, no doubt; still some day I expect I shall see you a pattern Benedick."

"Yes, some day, I suppose, I'll settle like a good boy and try and forget that any other woman is pretty except the one who will sit opposite me all my life. Oh dear!" and Garry would give a comical sigh at the picture of his being settled; but one day, growing rather serious, he had said to Blake, "I don't expect one would mind turning Benedick provided the Beatrice was all the world to one. And I will only marry a woman I really love." It was such a different speech to his usual fly-away talk of matrimony that his friend had opened his eyes, and made him think Garry was drifting seriously this time.

The opposing team had driven up to the players' pavilion; their ponies had been sent on and were now being walked up and down by their respective grooms. The Thirstone Polo Club was a comparatively young affair, but, thanks to the zeal of the captain, it was proving itself very efficient, and could send into the field a very fair team that had held its own with considerable skill against some good players. Most of the members were very keen on the match they were to play that day. Their opponents were a team from the dépôt of a cavalry regiment, and among them were two of the crack players in England, hence the excitement to win. Such a victory would be laurels to the Thirstone. Besides they were anxious to regain their lost

laurels ; this time fortune might be on their side as they were playing on their own ground.

Archie Blake, looking very well in his yellow shirt and light brown cap, was already mounted on his bay pony and evidently keenly anxious to have the others up, who were all standing chatting together, and the sun shining on the blacks and scarlets and yellows and browns, made a bright spot of colour against the green of the pavilion. The timekeeper sounded the bell and the teams broke up their knot and made a move to their ponies.

"We must win to-day," said Archie Blake to Garry, as the latter passed him. "Keep a sharp look-out for those two."

"Rather, Archie. I'll ride 'em off like the devil," he answered in his firm, cheery tones, with a knowing look in his eyes, for he guessed to whom Archie referred. "Steady, old girl," to his pony, as he bent to pat her after mounting. "You and I will show them what we can do," and he trotted off after Blake to take up his position as number one. The ball was thrown between and play began in earnest.

The other pavilion, which made a tea room and a shelter for the visitors and members who came to witness the matches and practices, was little more than a stone's-throw from that of the men. This being a match day the field presented almost a small Hurlingham attendance ; the county and townspeople showed up in good numbers. The Polo Club was proving a very popular institution ; it made a little diversion and somewhere to meet one's friends in a pleasant fashion in the summer afternoons ; and many of the ladies actually took a real interest in the game and learnt to score the goals, whilst several looked on for a time and then thoroughly enjoyed an afternoon's gossip about those present and about those who were not, for Thirstone was no more innocent of scandal than is any other country town, especially when the teapot appears.

"I do hope our side will win, Nettie," said Dorothy Wynter, watching a certain light brown head whose every movement on horse was full of life and animation. "Our side" of course referred to the Thirstone colours.

"Yes, Dorrie dear, I do hope they will ; Jack will be so disgusted if they don't this time," said Nettie Middleton, a young matron whose husband was playing three.

"Poor Number One always seems to come in for a great deal of fault-finding," remarked Dorothy to her friend; "and yet he appears to do a lot." And Dorothy's eyes followed with interest Garry's riding; "our side" evidently only contained one person, and that person with his sunny face was fast attracting not only her eyes but a little bit of her heart.

"You see Number One has always to be well to the fore. He generally gets shouted at, no matter how well he plays. Hark at Mr. Blake now!" And above the talking and the quick thud of the ponies' hoofs, Blake's voice came thundering:

"Now, then, Number One! can't you—" but the rest was heard only by the winds, for Blake had got the ball and with one good hit sent it between the posts. A wild Whoop! proclaimed a goal, and the bell ringing called rest after the first quarter.

Immediately all the ponies' heads were turned to the pavilion; some of the men dismounted and allowed their tired steeds to walk leisurely across the grass, glad enough of the rest, for the play had been fast and ponies, like masters, enter as keenly into the fray. But the majority of the players galloped their ponies with slack rein across the intervening space. The popping of corks told that refreshments were being dispensed during the short time allotted for rest. Several of the members took this opportunity to exchange a few words with their friends on the other side.

"Here come Jack and Garry," said Mrs. Middleton, who was still sitting with Dorothy, sheltering themselves from the hot glare under their parasols. "Now we shall know exactly how they stand; somehow I lost count."

In watching the two men, Nettie did not notice the faint flush that came into Dorothy's cheeks as they approached; but Dorothy felt it and it made her so angry with herself that her manner to Garry Hume was so very chilling that he wondered how he had offended her, as a rule she was so chatty and lively. But till this day Dorothy had not known how much his presence could move her and the knowledge was humiliating.

"And so you are actually three to their two; that's grand, Garry," said Mrs. Middleton; he was generally called by his Christian name; he said himself no one ever called him Mr. after a week's acquaintance. He had remarked this to Dorothy, so she carefully adhered to the formal prefix to his name, though

sometimes she found it difficult. "You really must win this time."

"Yes, I think we will if only the sun won't get into our eyes," said Garry laughing as he tried to dodge the sunbeams which came through a tree right into his eyes.

"That's a good excuse. I suppose you will make it one if you lose," said Dorothy rather shortly; she was still feeling exasperated with herself for fear this man might see that already he had the power to move her. She had heard of his reputation as a flirt, and Dorothy did not intend to be flirted with. Bright and agreeable, she was no flirt, and held a very hard opinion of those who could condescend to fritter away the great gift of love by playing with it. Dorothy had tried her hardest to hold out against this man, whose great fault was the one she most disliked, but his winning manner and his face seemed so honest that she was fast losing her heart, and it was annoying her that it should be so.

"I hope I will invent a better. Don't be satirical, Miss Wynter, it does not suit you; if we lose we shall not do it for such a paltry reason; we'll die game. But, Miss Wynter, are you annoyed about anything?" he added in a lower tone as he noticed Nettie was busily talking to a lady.

"Annoyed? No. Why should I be?" answered Dorothy, looking up quickly at his different tone, he seemed so anxious.

"No, I don't know why you should be, only you are so different." He had no time to say more for the bell was ringing and Blake was calling out to the laggards to stir themselves. The captain was more excited than ever, and not being addicted to ladies' society felt it his duty to call off his men, otherwise the chatting might spoil his game. During the next quarter Archie Blake was most energetic in shouting to his team to hurry themselves. He was inclined to be sarcastically funny, and at times the language was much embellished with figures of speech not quite parliamentary, but to which of course the ladies were supposed to shut their ears.

During the next interval, Dorothy carefully engrossed herself in conversation whenever Garry came near; finding his efforts in vain he sought consolation with an old friend of his, a Mrs. Frere, a very pretty woman who had another girl with her. Then Dorothy grew annoyed because he kept away and still

more annoyed when she saw to whom he was paying attention ; the demon jealousy gave her one or two twists that afternoon, and how she hated that Mrs. Frere, whom she did not even know, and then she felt what a fool she had been, for Garry did not seek to interrupt her again ; he had avenged himself. What did Dorothy care for the young man in whose vapid conversation she seemed to take such delight ? all her attention was centred in that well-made figure, whose every movement was a charm in her sight and whose cheery laugh was stealing through the barricade she tried to set up, making her long to tear it down and surrender, but she felt that would be weak-minded. If he only were not such a flirt.

The game was over, and the Thirstones won by two goals ; the captain and his team were well satisfied, and their satisfaction required much health drinking. The visitors were fast beginning to disperse, and at last only a few stragglers remained, where a little while before all was life and colour. The group beyond, at the players' pavilion, was still in animated conversation, going over the game stroke by stroke, till at last some of the members, seeing much movement and agitation among the sunshades, remembered their wives were waiting for them, which caused them to make a start for the other pavilion.

"Well, I must be off," said Jack Middleton to Blake and Garry, to whom he had been talking. "Will you two fellows come over and dine to-morrow night—only ourselves ?"

"Thanks, Middleton, with pleasure," answered Blake. "And as Hume will be with me, I will bring him over."

"That's all right, then. You know the time—7.30," and Jack strolled off to where his wife and Dorothy were waiting. Garry looked across and saw them getting into their dog-cart. He would very much like to have gone and assisted Dorothy, and to have found out the reason of her coldness, but Blake had got his conveyance and was already getting his things together, so he had to content himself with watching their start.

"Wo ! stand still, can't you, a minute ?" said Blake, addressing himself to the animal, who was evidently longing for the comforts of his stable. "Jump in, Garry ; Polly wants to be off ; she has had enough standing, she thinks." Garry jumped in, and soon they were bowling away round the field, the last to leave.

"Good-night, good-night ! Congratulate you !" was shouted

out to each other from the Middletons' cart as they passed. Garry waved his hat and gave a special smile to Miss Wynter, who was sitting at the back, which she returned by a very sweet one, forgetting for the moment she was smiling at the one with whom she intended to be so severe.

"Pretty girl that Miss Wynter," said Archie; "she looks better than when she came."

"Yes, she does, I think; she had been ill, I believe. She has a trying life with some old woman and her dog. Ugh! hard lines on a girl like that," answered Garry, with energetic emphasis, at which his friend could not help smiling under his moustache.

"Perhaps she will marry," remarked Blake. "She looks a trifle proud, though. You did not appear so full of conversation with her this afternoon. I suppose other attractions. I saw Mrs. Frere was there to-day, and had a good-looking girl with her. Oh, Garry, I am afraid you are a sad dog. Mrs. Frere should have taught you better in your youth," and Blake shook his head, but Garry only laughed.

"Poor cousin Annie, she had enough to do without teaching me. I was only with them a short time; she is a good sort. That girl with her is a beauty, but slow. After a while I felt a pin would have been handy to have made her move her face. She is horrified and amused with the same expression—that's the worst of a regular beauty; they are generally monotonous," said Garry with a laugh. He did not like to confess, even to his friend, that he had been amusing himself because Dorothy had been so unfriendly, for he was fast learning to know that all things would be well if he could but get her to be her own sweet self. He was shy of owning how dear she was to him, for he had laughed at love, and it seemed as if love was going to turn the tables and mock him back.

Dorothy had gone home a little happier for the passing smile, but then she thought that he probably would give an equally nice one to any other woman. Still she felt that, in spite of his being a flirt, some part of the barrier had given way already, and that if she did not take care it would all tumble down ignominiously against her will.

"Now, Dorrie dear," said Mrs. Jack the next afternoon, "mind you wear that pretty heliotrope frock to-night."

"Why?" asked Dorothy in pretended ignorance.

"Have you forgotten those two men are coming to dine? I want you to look your best."

"For what, Nettie? I really don't see why I should waste my one only smart gown to please Mr. Blake, who never deigns to notice if a young woman is dressed by Worth or by a cheap dressmaker; a gown is simply wasted on him," and Dorothy wilfully kept out the other name she could not bring in.

"Mr. Blake! You know very well I did not mean him; it was Garry of whom I was thinking. You and he got on so well, though I noticed yesterday you were both very distant. Dorrie, dear, he is a real good fellow. I wish——" but Nettie broke off on remarking the colour rising, afraid to say more.

"My dear Nettie, as if Mr. Hume cares about what I put on. Perhaps if I appeared in one of those awful floppy mustard-coloured gowns, with a few straws in my hair, perhaps he might look; otherwise, I don't think my appearance gives him much cause for reflection. He is amusing, but too much of a flirt for him to be troubled about any one." And though she had spoken in a would-be airy manner, Nettie noticed the under-current of bitterness that lay beneath.

"It is his manner which makes people call him a flirt; he means nothing."

"Flirts never do."

"Well, flirting is not an uncommon failing, Dorothy, among men and women. But you are wronging him a little. He is a man who could love very truly and be most faithful—of that I am sure," said Nettie, defending her friend.

"Because you have a husband who is devoted to you, you imagine all men the same. Why, you have heard Mr. Hume yourself talk of marriage——"

"Yes, and he would be the first to respect it; young men talk like that for show off, as the children say."

"Well, Nettie, don't let us waste any more talk on that Mr. Garry Hume; nothing will convince me. The only person he really loves is Number One," said Dorothy, still trying by sarcasm, which she felt was untrue, to hide her real feelings from her friend, who was so keen about this affair.

"Perhaps that's lucky as he plays Number One; he will take care of himself. Poor Number One!" sighed Nettie rather

maliciously. "You are getting quite caustic in your remarks. Don't, Dorrie, it makes you so superior."

"You idiot, Nettie!" said Dorothy, laughing naturally at last at her friend's comic look of horror. "Let us go and dress and forget there are such tiresome creatures as men."

And linking her arm in Nettie's they went up the stairs together.

But the heliotrope gown was put on, and as Dorothy came into the drawing-room, Garry thought he had never seen her look so well; always pretty she was at her very best. Her fair hair curling gracefully over her forehead, imparted a softness to the outline of her face, and her colour had heightened a little on entering, for she felt half ashamed to meet the mocking eyes of her friend, whom she knew would be amused at her weakness in donning the gown after such a tirade. Dinner passed off well, and Dorothy's barrier of reserve she erected when with Garry, melted under the infection of his good spirits, and she felt the extreme fascination of the man against her will. The success of the previous day furnished topic for much laughing and talking over the various incidents that had occurred.

"Wouldn't you rather be any one but Number One, Mr. Hume?" inquired Dorothy.

"No. Why?" asked Garry.

"Because you are the only one whose delinquencies on the field are before the public; we hear nothing but 'Now then, Number One,' and so on," answered Dorothy.

"Oh! That's Blake's way of covering his own faults," laughed Garry with a sly look at his captain. "And I don't mind it, it is all in the day's work; there is always a scapegoat, and Number One has to be to the fore."

"Poor Number One!" said Nettie, pretending to sigh.

"Now then, Mrs. Jack," expostulated Garry.

"Happy Number One!" said Blake. "He manages to secure all the ladies' pity whilst the poor hard-worked captain gets none."

"Oh! you are badly used," said Nettie. "But it appears to agree with you, Mr. Blake."

"Thank you, Mrs. Middleton, you are always kind, and next week I shall rely on your kindness by getting you to promise to come to our ball in good time."

"Of course, the ball is next Thursday, this day week. Very well, we won't be fashionable ; I should never be late for a dance, but when one has a Jack who will not be stirred after dinner, what can one do?" and Nettie gave an impudent nod to her husband as she rose.

"That's a wife's excuse ! Blake, when you are married mind you keep your wife in better order than I have mine," said Jack, laughing as his wife and Dorothy passed out.

"Will you be very kind, Miss Wynter, and keep me a few dances?" said Garry quietly later on in the drawing-room when Nettie was singing.

"A few!" remarked Dorothy, lifting her eyebrows. "You mean one, perhaps ; it is such a long way off you will have forgotten you have asked me even for that."

"Thank you, Miss Wynter," said Garry angrily, and he drew himself up with quiet dignity. "You evidently have a very good opinion of me."

Dorothy was sorry afterwards when she saw she had hurt him, but she felt unless she hardened herself she was yielding fast to his dear presence ; she did not dare analyze her heart now, she tried to think all the bitter things which she had always attributed to a flirt. It was all useless sophistry, for Dorothy knew that life would never be the same if Garry were really what she wanted to think him ; but she was sorry she had been so very unkind and would have made up for her speech, but Nettie asked her to sing. Out of repentance she sang a touching little ballad meant for his ears alone ; he heard the words, but Garry thought sadly, perhaps they are intended for some other fellow, for Garry felt he was making no advance ; in fact, he appeared to have lost what little he thought he had won. Till now he had never experienced any difficulty and rebuffs were foreign to him ; true love was making him humble, and he began to despair that Dorothy would ever listen to him, for he felt she was far above any of those for whom he had only had a transient affection. Did she but know it, Dorothy was doing the very thing that could most attract a man of Garry's nature ; like most men he valued highly what cost him hard to obtain. The week following the dinner, Dorothy thawed a little, but when Garry felt things were more pleasant, she drew back with some snub, which had the unpleasant effect of cold water after basking in sunshine, but

it did not damp his ardour, and Garry did not quite despair, for the hopeful gleams came every now and again, and he knew that give a man time and patience any obstacle can be overcome.

CHAPTER II.

DISSIPATION in any form is welcome in the routine of country life, where no one has time or opportunity to grow *blast*. The Polo ball was looked forward to with every conceivable pleasure, and two days afterwards the races were to come off. It was quite one rush of excitement.

True to her promise, Mrs. Middleton had managed to get her party to start in good time, in spite of her Jack's grumbling and Dorothy, who wanted to persuade her to go later.

"My dear Dorrie, I dare not disappoint Mr. Blake ; he depends on my punctuality. It would not be fair to treat him so badly ; besides, Garry made me promise to be in good time. What would happen to them both ?" And Nettie gave a quizzical glance at her friend, whose behaviour to such a fascinating fellow as Garry quite mystified her.

"Mr. Hume would bear our non-appearance with equanimity. He would have the lovely Mrs. Frere to console him."

"Mrs. Frere ? Why, she is old enough nearly to be his mother."

"The 'nearly' makes a wide difference to the quite. Those flirting married women are a perfect pest to society ; they spoil all the young men," said Dorothy, with rather more energy than the subject required.

"Oh !" thought Nettie, "Dorrie is jealous of Mrs. Frere. Garry will have to be careful, and I won't tell her she is his distant cousin and all about it. She shouldn't be jealous."

"But, Dorrie, Mrs. Frere and Garry don't flirt. They are only very old friends," said Nettie out loud.

"Old friends are better than new ones, considering how he neglected us all the other afternoon for that made-up woman."

"Don't be so uncharitable. When you arrive at her age, Dorrie, you will perhaps be glad to cover your thin front with a *toupee*." At which witticism they both laughed. "There is the carriage. We must not keep Jack waiting."

Mr. Blake was on the watch when they arrived at the rooms where the ball was given.

"Punctual, as usual, Mrs. Middleton. Jack ought to feel blessed in having a wife with a soul for punctuality."

"Yes, I think Jack ought to feel more than blessed. He looks it now, does he not? He always puts on that beautifully bored expression when I drag him out too early after dinner," answered Mrs. Middleton, smiling brightly at her Jack as she took Mr. Blake's arm and went into the room, while Jack gave his to Dorothy.

She had expected to see Garry at the entrance, and she thought he ought to have been there. Dorothy in a ball gown was a delightful vision, and to-night in yellow and pale blue she looked sweet. So thought Garry catching sight of her, and he hurried across the room, but he had to wait as several men were before him and she pretended not to see him. At last he got his chance just as a waltz was beginning.

"This is ours, Miss Wynter," he said coolly.

"I did not know I was engaged to you for this," said Dorothy.

"You promised me this one last week," he said audaciously. There is nothing like audacity for a man.

"I don't remember the number."

"No? Well, at any rate, it is the number I want. Don't let us waste it. It is such a grand tune."

Without further remark Dorrie went off with him. Garry knew how to dance, and they danced well together. That waltz and many others did they dance that night and, in spite of Mrs. Frere's presence, Dorothy's reserve vanished in the sunshine of his care and attention. It was a happy evening, and Dorothy began to think she had judged him hardly.

"Well, Miss Wynter, what made you treat me so coldly all the week? What have I done?" said Garry, taking her fan as they sat out after one of the dances. And he looked straight in her eyes as if to find the truth written therein, making Dorothy feel uncomfortable.

"I have not treated you coolly, as you call it, Mr. Hume. I—have no reason. It must be your own imagination."

"No; I am not given to imagination. It is the truth, and you know it. Dorothy!" And as she put out her hand to take her fan, he caught it in his and kept it prisoner—a very willing prisoner, though it lay unmoved in his strong grasp. "You have been sweet to me to-night. Why were you not kinder before?"

You were so at first. What made you change? Don't you know——"

"Oh, Garry, so sorry to disturb," said a voice breaking in on their solitude, and Mrs. Frere gave a slight bow to Dorothy, "but I have left one of my gloves in the supper-room, and I have mislaid—I mean lost my partner. Would you mind?"

"Not at all," said Garry with a smile as he rose to do her bidding, though in his innermost heart he was wishing her anywhere; while Dorothy, seeing only the smile, thought how pleased he was to do commissions for this handsome woman. As he bowed to Dorothy he whispered, "Wait here for me." But the sight of Mrs. Frere woke her old jealousy, which had lain dormant all the evening, for Garry had danced but once as yet with his old friend; still Dorothy hardened her heart. She was unreasoning; but when is love reasonable—or rather, when is jealousy open to reason? And because she fancied he was away longer than was necessary, seeing Nettie, she left her seat and joined her.

"Why, Dorrie, no partner? I thought you were with Garry."

"Yes, so I was; but of course that Mrs. Frere sent him off on some errand; I believe she does it on purpose to get him away from any girl. There he is with her now," said Dorothy, with such an ache at her heart. What a silly girl she was to suppose that a man like Garry could ever be anything but a butterfly. Look at him now, laughing and talking to Mrs. Frere in exactly the same manner he would have talked to her, and her stupid blind jealousy made her imagine his conversation was of the tenderest. How should she know of his great disappointment at finding her gone from where he had left her, and that he would have gone in search of her but it was his dance with Mrs. Frere, for Garry wanted to continue a little speech that would have taken away Dorrie's heartache entirely; but unfortunately our society masks are so well-fitting that none can penetrate into the comedies or tragedies they hide. Nettie was highly amused at Dorothy's jealousy; she felt it a good omen for Garry's success, for no woman is jealous of a man unless there is the shadow of love to prompt it, and Nettie, seeing things apparently growing rather more crooked than she liked, thought perhaps a word as to the truth of Garry's relationship to Mrs. Frere would help matters, but a ball-room was no place for confidences.

Garry was a distant cousin to Mrs. Frere ; she and her husband had been very good to him when he was young, at the time his mother died, and Garry always bore a chivalrous affection for his cousin and her husband. All this would have enlightened Dorothy, but of course she was ignorant, and so stumbled blindly simply because she had heard him described as "a flirt." Dorothy was led off by a tall, good-looking man, a man in a lancer regiment, but, unlike the majority of the military, the mysteries of dancing was a hidden art ; they hopped about in uneven steps till Dorothy, compassionate for herself, remarked that she thought their steps did not go together. At another time she would have been inwardly amused, but at that moment she did not really care ; the ball-room, which before had been a glimpse of all that was bright and beautiful, had suddenly changed and she felt tired and out of tune with gaiety. The lancer led her to a quiet corner in the conservatory, a little hidden by palms and ferns. Dorothy's conversational powers lost their usual brilliancy, and while they dragged through a desultory conversation on the weather, and the arrangements of the ball, a voice not far off struck on her ears ; it could be no other than Mrs. Frere.

"Well, Garry, I am awfully afraid I interrupted a very tender scene a moment or so ago. I am really sorry, but I was obliged to come to your help."

"Not at all—only the usual ball-room conversation, you know," answered Garry, in such a nonchalant voice that Dorothy felt somehow humiliated.

"That's all right ; but you did look dangerously near, as if you were on the point of saying something very sweet to that pretty girl in yellow. I should have turned back, but I could not. I am afraid, Garry, you don't improve ; you are a sad flirt," said Mrs. Frere with a laugh in her voice.

"Most men are ; it is the way to enjoy life."

But Dorothy could stand no more ; she did not want to hear his opinion on flirtations. With an excuse to the lancer, he gave her his arm. To get out of the conservatory they must pass the couple. Her partner had not noticed the conversation, but Dorothy's heart had made her ears very sharp. With a cold, proud look in her white face, she swept by, her head held high ; she never deigned even a glance in Garry's direction, but said something in a slow, languid voice to her partner about the heat of

the conservatory. But Garry saw her face, and he knew she had overheard those careless words. He could have cut out his tongue before saying what must have wounded her. She had been so sweet all the evening that the chains she had begun to weave round him had grown stronger than ever, and he had meant to rivet them but for the interruption ; and since, he had been looking forward to his last dance to make things right, and now his own hand had been his undoing.

"Garry, that girl is very pretty, but rather proud-looking," said Mrs. Frere. She never thought that their conversation could have been heard.

"Yes, she is proud and different to other girls ; she will never believe a chap is in earnest," said Garry rather slowly, looking away down the corridor where Dorothy had passed. His companion noticed the usually bright face was looking rather sad and anxious.

"Garry, is that *the* one, after all ? I am glad, for she looks a real good girl."

"Thank you, cousin Annie. Yes, she is the only one who has ever made me wish to lead a better life. Just now I was laughing because I did not care to own that you had interrupted me, and, cousin Annie, I am afraid she heard my careless speech, and will be thinking I am what I said I was. I would give all the world to have back those words."

"Well, Garry, if she did overhear, she will forgive if she loves you, for she must see you are in earnest. Take the next dance with her and make it up." And Mrs. Frere got up.

"Cousin Annie, you are always cheering. You have helped me many a time out of a difficulty, and so I always feel I ought to come to you when I get in them now. It is selfish, perhaps," said Garry, feeling a little more hopeful.

"I enjoy difficulties, but this is not one, and I hope soon to hear I may congratulate you, Garry," said Mrs. Frere, with a kind look at her favourite.

Garry dared not to be too hopeful ; still he would seek Dorothy and try and convince her. But she was not in the ball-room, neither could he see her anywhere else.

"Are the Middletons here ?" he asked of Archie.

"No, just gone ; Jack wanted to get away early and I think Miss Wynter was tired. Come and have some supper before

we go ; what with looking after the dowagers and doing my duty manfully, I have neglected myself. Come along."

"All right," said Garry following his host, determined that though he had missed his opportunity, his happiness should not go wrong for the sake of a word.

"Well, Dorrie, did you enjoy yourself?" said Nettie, coming into her room as she was brushing her hair before the glass.

"Yes, dear, very much," said Dorothy, brushing rather vigorously, keeping her face out of view, "though I got tired at the end. I think my lancer did for me ; he nearly disabled me with a prodigious tread on my foot. Poor man, he should learn dancing."

"I did not see Garry as we came away," said Nettie, who wanted to bring up the conversation to his affairs.

"No? I daresay he was dancing," and Dorothy's hair at that moment required much disentangling ; the conservatory came back to her memory, and she hoped Nettie would not talk of him.

"Yes, I think I did see him go in the conservatory with Mrs. Frere. She is his cousin—now let me see ; what relation? something like second or third cousin—and at the time of his mother's death, she and her husband were awfully good to him, and so they were a year or so before he came into his property : he got into some difficulty and they helped him out. Garry ought to be very grateful to them, and I think he is sincerely attached to her. That's why those who don't know, think Garry flirts with her ; one must never judge from appearances. Well, good-night, Dorrie dear ; don't dream of that huge lancer," and with a kiss Nettie tripped off, feeling she had done right, for the sign of tears in Dorothy's eyes had not escaped her sharp observation. Dorothy felt so glad to have heard this story, and going to sleep that night she dreamt she heard him call her "Dorothy," in his tender way, and it was not a "ball-room nothing."

The Polo races were fixed for the second day after the ball, and the August day dawned bright and hot. By half past one the temporary grand stand was well filled, and the little space in front was alive with gay-coloured gowns and sunshades, while bright specks dotted here and there revealed the various jockeys. The Middletons, who only lived about half a mile from the course, had walked over, while their cart well laden with provisions had been sent on and taken up its position among the carriages.

Nettie and Dorothy went first to the lawn to see their friends and invite many to partake of their hospitality. They had not been long on the lawn before Garry came up attired in his jockey dress.

"Those are not your colours?" said Nettie after the usual greetings.

"No. I am riding for another man. The club race is fixed third on the card, it ought to have been first."

"Doesn't Garry look beautiful as a jockey? You would make your fortune, man!" exclaimed Blake, coming up to the group.

"Now then, Archie, look out; I'll ride you off if you don't shut up," said Garry with laughter all over his face, for he was not the build of a first-class jockey, though he looked well in his clothes.

"You will only get disqualified and I shall win. Here, Garry, they want you in the weighing room; come on," and the two strode off before Garry had a chance of a word with Dorothy, for she had been occupied talking to a man, and for very shyness she could not turn round; his presence had sent the blood coursing into her face, but when he had gone the man left also and she turned to Nettie.

"Well, Dorrie, Jack as usual has gone to see the horses. We will stay here for the first race, and then go to the carriage and dispense lunch to the hungry."

"Yes, that will be best," said Dorrie watching as she spoke the file of horses going out of the paddock gate and on to the course, where a short preliminary canter was gone through to the post. A certain green cap attracted all her attention, and eagerly she watched the tedious process of getting them in line for starting, which is always a long affair; at last down went the flag and they were off. It was a five furlong race, and the pace was fast, but there was great excitement, as it resulted in a close finish between the green cap and a red one, but the red won by a short neck.

"Garry looked like winning," said Nettie as the numbers went up. "Now for lunch, Dorrie; I am famishing." They went across to their cart and soon were besieged by other famished mortals, and the next race having no attraction for the occupants of the cart, it was run unnoticed. Dorothy began to long for the club race to be over as then, perhaps, Garry would join them—and she had not seen him since the night of the ball.

"The numbers are up for the club race. Mark them for me, Dorrie; I know you have a pencil. Who is going to win, Captain Drew?" said Nettie to a man lunching with them.

"They say Hume's grey, Coquette, has a big chance, though I don't think she can give much to Blake's chestnut. It is a two mile, and there is a bad corner down hill. Coquette is a bit tricky sometimes, but she can go. I have my money on Hume, so I hope he will pull it off."

This being the race of the day both riders and ponies came in for general attention as they trotted down to the post. Garry went by on his grey, wearing his own colours, black and orange, and Dorothy noticed his pony seemed very fidgety, and that it required strong hands to hold her in. The start was some way off, glasses were levelled to watch the start; the flag dropped and on they came, thud! thud! from the ponies' hoofs, the best ponies laying back a little, their jockeys nursing them for the long race before them. Round they came again without much change, except that a few were beginning to drop out. Now it was only half a mile to the finish; the excitement was growing more intense as Blake and Garry's ponies were beginning to fight for the lead. At the bend, which had been described as nasty, three or four of the ponies looked as if they were close together, when all of a sudden there was a breathless pause in the shouting of the bookmakers, and the cry of, "A man down!" went from lip to lip, but soon the confusion of tongues began again, and the bookmakers started their roaring afresh—what mattered a man down? it was money to them. Who was down? was the question anxiously asked; and Dorothy felt sick at the sound; a presentiment filled her with horror, she scarcely dared lift the glasses.

"Garry Hume's down!" said some man passing Mr. Middleton's cart.

"It's Garry, Dorothy!" said Nettie, pitying the poor girl, from whose face every atom of colour had fled.

At that moment Jack hurriedly came up.

"Jack, if Garry is hurt, have him taken to our place; it is the nearest for him," said Nettie as her husband hardly waited to hear, but hurried off to that group beyond.

Blake had won, but his victory was clouded by the sad accident. The pony was up, and stood looking at the group

as much as to say, "I am up, why does not my master do the same?"

Her poor master, unfortunately, was lying in an unconscious state, though the doctor had partially restored him, when he went off again just as Jack Middleton came up.

"Doctor Thorpe, my wife says he must be taken to our house. It is the nearest at hand."

"Yes, that will be best. He has broken his collar-bone, and, somehow, I fear he has injured his leg ; it was under him. We must get him sharp to your house."

A stretcher was got, and the poor fellow was laid upon it. Only a short time before he had been among the crowd the gayest of the gay, now he was being carried away like a lifeless log.

After telling Jack to have Garry taken to The Croft, Nettie and Dorrie hastened there beforehand. They were both glad to leave the noise and sight of the gay holiday people, for the sad accident had naturally taken all the pleasure away. Dorothy thought they would never reach the house ; the short walk seemed miles, and then there was the sickening dread knocking at her heart that perhaps he might never recover. How she longed for some of the past hours to atone for her cold hardness. Perhaps the chance would never be given her, and thus poor Dorrie tormented herself.

"I must put a bed in the drawing-room ; it won't do to be carrying him up the stairs with all these broken bones."

And the kind-hearted Nettie quickly set to work, and by the time the men arrived with their burden the room was already transformed ; the pretty little drawing-room was converted into a comfortable bedroom. The men carried him in and left him with the doctor and Jack, who, with Nettie's help, got him to bed. A man had been dispatched for a nurse, and she soon arrived. Meanwhile poor Dorothy was waiting anxiously about ; every moan that came from the room tore her heart and made her turn cold. She could do nothing but wait about restlessly for the doctor's verdict. After a dreary time of suspense he came out.

"Ah, Mrs. Middleton, a nasty accident ; but he is a strong, healthy fellow. With care he will soon mend. It was most thoughtful and kind of you to put him in the drawing-room.

Ah! there is nurse Daye. I must see her with the patient, please. I shall call in again this evening," and he vanished into the bedroom with the nurse.

Mrs. Middleton helped in the nursing, for it proved a long affair, as the leg had been more seriously hurt than they anticipated—in fact, the doctor was afraid that it would be a year or two before he would be able to get about without a stick; but this they kept from him, at first fearing it would be a hindrance to his getting quickly well, for Nettie guessed what a blow it would be to the pleasure-seeking Garry, who loved sport of all kinds; he would feel it so hard to have to be a cripple for such a time.

In spite of his restless nature, Garry had borne his wearying illness with great patience. He often inquired of Mrs. Middleton if her friend were still with her, and Nettie encouraged him to talk about Dorothy, without letting him see she was drawing him on to the one subject which seemed uppermost in his mind. Nettie came to the conclusion that the accident would be the means of bringing this tiresome couple together.

One day, when he was getting convalescent and allowed on the sofa, Mrs. Middleton was obliged to go away for the day. She told Dorothy it would be a kindness to read to the invalid in the afternoon, in her place. Dorothy did not say if she would, but Nettie guessed that probably the reading would be done.

It was a dull afternoon, and Dorothy, looking out, saw the first signs of autumn's appearance in the tinted leaves. Pitying the prisoner in the drawing-room this cheerless afternoon, she stole as far as the door. By the time she reached it her courage began to go, but before it evaporated entirely she timidly knocked, and the nurse, coming out, opened it for her. Dorothy's colour was considerably heightened and her eyes down as she entered, so she did not see the happy look that came into Garry's thin face when he saw his visitor.

"Miss Wynter, this is a treat! My other nurse has left me for the day, but she sends me a very good substitute. Will you sit down?" and he motioned to a seat which faced him.

"I hope you are better, Mr. Hume," said Dorothy, letting her eyes linger a moment shyly on his face, which looked so altered with the small beard that had grown.

"I look rather a wreck, don't I?" laughed Garry, touching his

beard. "Quite a grand colonist's beard. They are going to let me shave soon, then I shall feel myself."

"Oh, it is not bad," said Dorrie, not quite knowing what to say in her shyness. She almost wished the nurse would return, yet she felt happy at seeing him again, only it was rather trying to have to sit facing him and to feel his eyes on her with their tender look of restful contentment at her presence. "Shall I read you anything?"

"No, thank you. Let us talk instead. Do you know I have seen nothing of you since that ball, and I was longing so to see you, as I had something I wanted to say. I—think you overheard some nonsense I was talking, did you?" inquired Garry in a quiet voice, though his face flushed a little.

"It was nothing. Don't talk of it. Why bring back words uttered as nonsense?" said Dorothy, fearing he should excite himself.

"Because I think that you mistook me. Did you, Dorothy?" and his voice lingered tenderly on her name.

"I don't know, Mr. Hume," answered Dorothy in a very low tone.

"Well, I do. And since I have been lying here my life has come before me, showing me the carelessness of my ways, and I am learning to see things in their true light. You thought I did not care for you seriously. Dorothy, darling, can't you guess how truly I love you—with a love I have never given to any other woman? Can you forgive me, and give me yours in return?" And he reached out his hand and in a hesitating answer she laid hers in it.

"Yes, I can; though there is nothing to forgive, and—" She could not say the words she would, for he was watching her face with such love in his eyes.

"Say it to me here, Dorothy, darling," and Garry drew her to him, and kneeling beside him she whispered the words he wanted to hear.

"So, Dorothy, you would not have anything to do with a flirt? and you were jealous of poor cousin Annie?" said Garry a little later, when he had made her confess why she had been so cold and unkind in the old days.

"Oh, Garry! that's cruel," answered Dorothy with a slight hesitation on his Christian name which pleased him, as he objected to "Mr. Hume." "I shall love your cousin Annie now,"

said she with a happy laugh as they sat hand in hand so contentedly in the fast-deepening twilight.

"Well, you good people in the gloaming—here come the tea and lights," said the cheery voice of Mrs. Middleton as she came into the room. "I hope your new nurse has taken care of you, Garry?"

"Rather, Mrs. Jack. Very good care, I assure you. I feel so much better to-day. You have all been so good to me. When the doctor packs me off I don't know how I shall go, I shall miss you all."

"You must not talk of going yet; I don't like my patients to get out of my hands too soon. Here is your tea, Dorrie, and lovely buttered toast—that is for the invalid. Invalids get awfully spoilt. Garry, you will become quite conceited with all these delicate attentions."

"Yes, I feel rather like a great Mogul," laughed Garry, who would have laughed at anything that day. His happy looks did not escape Mrs. Middleton, nor did the bright colour in Dorothy's cheeks—they had been so pale of late. She was not surprised when the news was told her later on. She was delighted, for she had set her heart on this match, but she had begun to fear its success when she saw how they were drifting.

Next day, after the doctor had paid his usual visit, Dorothy went in to the drawing-room. The bright September sun was shining, touching up the trees and making them glisten in their many tints. The autumn beauty outside looked quite gay in the light. She found Garry lying on his sofa looking rather quietly away through the window.

"Dreaming, Garry dear?" said Dorothy as her hand stole over his hair.

"Ah, darling; is that you?" and he took her hand and kissed it.

"Why, Garry, you look as if—you have been crying. What is it, dear?" and with the motherly protecting love that is in most women, she came round and kneeling down put her arm tenderly round his neck.

"Invalids are weak, Dorothy mine. But, darling, I feel I ought not to ask you to link yourself to a cripple like me. Dr. Thorpe says it will be two years before I shall be able to get about without a stick—two years, Dorrie!"

"Two years are not long, and I will be there to take care of you, Garry. I am not going to wait two years!" said Dorothy in pretty presumption.

"Dorrie, you are too good. My darling, are you sure you won't repent being a kind of nurse?"

"No, I shall never repent, and I shall make an excellent nurse. Let me see if that sad look has vanished. I can't bear to see you sad, Garry; it is not you."

"Well, shall I grin? I can't look sad now. Dorrie, you have brought all the sunshine into my life. Blake sent me a message that they had played their last match for the season last week. I wonder shall I ever play again?" and Garry sighed a little as he looked at his broken limb, but Dorothy stopped the sigh.

"No sighing allowed, Garry. Of course you will play again, and be pitched into as hard as ever. 'Now then, Number One,'" laughed Dorothy, imitating Blake's sharp tones.

"Poor 'Number One' generally caught it; still if I have lost my place in polo, I hope I will keep it in my sweet's love."

"Yes, dear, always first in my heart," was the whisper back.

Into Temptation.

By A. PERRIN.

CHAPTER IV.

MR. BOSCAWEN IMPROVES THE OPPORTUNITY.

“ Maidens like moths are ever caught by glare,
And mammon wins his way, where seraphs might despair.”

—*Byron.*

TWO days later I was sitting disconsolately by the drawing-room window watching the rain pouring down with a hopeless persistency. It was past four o'clock in the afternoon, and it had been raining on and off ever since my expedition with Aunt Addie to the Vicarage.

I had nothing to do. What books there were in the house that were neither religious nor medical, chiefly consisted of Sir Walter Scott's novels, which I had read and re-read at Miss Stogden's till I was sick of the lot. My clothes were in excellent repair, so I had no mending to do, not even a stocking to darn, and I had never been any good at fancy work even if the materials had been at hand.

There was no piano in the house, and I could neither draw nor paint, so I sat and envied Tom, who had gone out, in open defiance of Aunt Addie's strict injunctions to the contrary, and was enjoying himself in the company of some boy with whom he had scraped an acquaintance in place of the absent Barton.

I was in the middle of a big yawn, heartily wishing it was time to go to bed and so end the day, when suddenly the door opened and Mary announced Mr. Boscawen. I sprang up in delight, and greeted my visitor effusively.

“ I'm very sorry,” I said, shaking hands with him, “ but Aunt Addie isn't up to-day. The rain has made her worse; but I hope you will stay and let me give you some tea after your walk.”

Mr. Boscawen beamed, and settled himself in an easy-chair opposite me.

"I'm very sorry to hear your aunt is no better," he remarked "I came to inquire for her."

"Oh, it's nothing much. She hasn't any new disease to-day," I said laughing. My spirits were in a state of bubble. I was so pleased to have some one to talk to, more especially Mr. Boscawen, who treated me with such deference and respect.

"*Any new disease?*" repeated my companion in a tone of astonishment.

Then it struck me that my remark had been flippant and in bad taste. Moreover, Mr. Boscawen knew nothing of Aunt Addie's peculiarities, and I was afraid, if I enlightened him, that I should fall in his estimation as being both rude and ungrateful.

"I was only joking," I said feebly, and at that moment, to my relief, Mary entered with the tea-tray.

The rain had made the evening quite chilly, and we drew our chairs nearer the fire, while Mary deposited the gipsy-table, laden with the tea-things, on the hearthrug. The fire-light gleamed and danced reflected in the bright silver teapot, and the rain poured down outside with greater force than ever, making us feel still more comfortable indoors.

"Ah! this is nice," said Mr. Boscawen, sipping his tea contentedly. "What a pity it is that I must go back to India in another month."

"Oh! must you? I hoped you were going to be here a long time. Aunt Addie seems to know so few people."

"My leave will be up, you see," said Mr. Boscawen, smiling at me indulgently, "and I have to be back in my kacheri, or office, on a certain date at a certain hour."

"Fancy! how odd that seems."

"Yes; I'm only on three months' leave, but it's the first of any kind that I've taken during the whole of my service."

Mr. Boscawen swelled himself out proudly.

"Really," I replied admiringly, "and why is that?"

"Oh!" said Mr. Boscawen, with a wave of his hand, "I'm very fond of my work, you see, and then it's a fearful expense coming home. I assure you, my dear young lady, this trip will have cost me not a penny under three thousand rupees!"

It sounded a stupendous sum. Mr. Boscawen, I thought, must be a very rich man, and I looked at him in awe.

"What are you out in India?" I ventured to inquire.

"I belong to the Bengal Civil Service," he said, in a tone that caused me mentally to write down each letter of the three words in capitals, "and I hold a position which is called collector—that is, the local governor and magistrate of a district. It's the first service in India."

I could only gasp out, "Oh!" and Mr. Boscawen continued :

"The pay is good, though it might be better. The position is excellent, and another great advantage is that a man's widow and children are so well provided for. There is an old joke among the chaperons that a civilian is worth three hundred a year dead or alive."

We both laughed, though I had not the faintest idea what I was laughing at, as Mr. Boscawen's information had been absolute Greek to me.

"You would have liked India," he said presently, putting up his eye-glass and looking at me. "I think the life would have suited you; a sensible, clear-headed girl is bound to get on well out there, and you so very rarely meet one."

I felt proud as I listened to this indirect praise.

"I'd give *anything* to go," I said sighing.

"I am sure if you *had* gone you would have married very well and made an excellent housekeeper," said Mr. Boscawen enthusiastically.

"Oh, no; I don't think I should have married."

"And why not, pray?"

"Well, I never thought much about it, and then I know I'm not pretty, which makes all the difference."

"Indeed," cried Mr. Boscawen eagerly, "I think it's much more in a girl's favour *not* to be pretty. A man, when he reaches a certain age, and begins to look about for a healthy, sensible wife, steers clear of the pretty ones. I agree with you that you are not exactly pretty, but you are what is much better, a well-grown handsome girl!"

Mr. Boscawen slapped his leg in his vehemence, and was just starting another speech beginning with, "You are——," when the door opened and in burst Tom.

Never had I felt so evilly-disposed towards anybody as I did:

at that moment towards my young brother. I felt certain my new friend had been on the point of saying something extremely pleasant, and now Tom had spoilt it all.

Tears of vexation rose to my eyes. I had been longing to hear nice things said of myself, and, as I turned sulkily to the window, Mr. Boscowen rose to depart, evidently not relishing the addition to our party of a damp school-boy, with mud all over his clothes, and in a few minutes I was watching him walk down the road in his macintosh, with an enormous umbrella held over his head.

"Is that the old blow-hard from the Vicarage?" asked Tom, putting out his tongue and making long noses at the retreating figure.

"*Don't* be so rude, Tom. He'll look back and see you."

"Well, and what if he does?" said Tom exasperatingly. "Next time I see him, I'll tell him you called him old-man-curry-powder!"

The long noses were then directed at me.

"For goodness sake don't be rude to him," I said, debasing myself so far as to speak beseechingly, "or he'll never come here again, and he's quite the nicest man I ever met."

"Oh, yes! and you've met so many, haven't you?" squeaked Tom, trying to imitate my voice, and dancing round me derisively. "We're quite the young lady now, and give old gentlemen tea in the drawing-room and think we're so beastly fascinating."

And Tom minced across the room, holding his filthy pocket-handkerchief daintily in the middle, and simpering from side to side with what were intended to represent the manners of a young lady, until I was compelled to burst out laughing, angry as I felt with him.

CHAPTER V.

THE COLLECTOR OF KUTTAHPORE.

"Drest in a little brief authority."—*Shakespeare*.

THE next morning, which dawned clear and bright, a delightful thing happened.

This was nothing more nor less than an invitation from Mrs. Carey for me to go over to the Vicarage to tea that afternoon, and accompany them in their walk afterwards.

It was a piece of wild excitement for me, and the morning seemed to drag more than usual, so anxious was I for the time to arrive when I could start.

Tom was not asked, for which I was truly thankful, but he chose to consider himself highly insulted at being ignored, and went out the moment breakfast was over, calling Mrs. Carey all the names he could think of.

Aunt Addie was very anxious that I should go to the Vicarage in her bath chair, which was, no doubt, a considerate offer, but one that I firmly declined, and I finally set off followed by Mary, whom Aunt Addie insisted on burdening with shawls and umbrellas in case it should rain before I got there.

When I arrived I was shown into the dining-room, where the Vicarage party were assembled, a substantial tea being spread out on the table.

They all seemed very glad to see me, especially Mr. Boscawen, who placed a chair for me beside him and appeared anxious to do everything to set me at my ease. Mrs. Carey presided, neat and smiling, behind the huge old-fashioned tea-pot, with a chubby child on either side of her, and Mr. Carey sat pale and silent at the other end of the table. The children, whom I supposed to be aged about four and five, stared unblinkingly at me with large saucer-like eyes, and refused to open their mouths (except to cram in bread and jam) when their mother urged them to tell me their names and ages, neither of which did I desire to know in the very least.

"Johnnie," said Mrs. Carey to the younger of the two, "you are a naughty boy not to tell the lady your name."

Johnnie put his head on one side, and began to rub jammy fingers over his mother's dress.

"Caroline," put in Mr. Boscawen severely, "you bring up those children very badly; now, if that had been *my* boy, he would have done what he was told at once, and not taken all this time over it."

"Wait till you've got a boy of your own," retorted Mrs. Carey with spirit, but Mr. Boscawen was not at all disconcerted, and proceeded to find fault with the other child.

"Listen to that little monkey sniffing," he said, pointing at her with his knife. "Patty, you ought not to sniff down here!"

"I'm sniffin' up," said the child, repeating the offence, whereupon we all laughed, which delighted Miss Patty so much that she entirely spoilt the effect of her repartee by screaming: "Sniffin' up! Sniffin' up!" with such violence and persistency that she had to be removed in disgrace to the nursery, and soon afterwards we all adjourned to the drawing-room.

After showing me books and photographs for a short time, Mrs. Carey suggested that we should start for our walk, and accordingly we all set off, Mr. and Mrs. Carey leading the way, and Mr. Boscowen and myself bringing up the rear.

"We will go along the west cliff," said Mrs. Carey, picking up her skirts and taking her husband's arm, upon which my companion offered me his, which I declined.

"I can get along better alone," I said, "if you don't mind."

"Of course I *mind*," said Mr. Boscowen smiling; "but you must do as you like best. How well you walk, Miss Josephine! Most girls slouch along with their shoulders up to their ears, laying the foundations of endless doctors' bills in the future."

I coloured with pleasure, stepping out more freely than ever, and holding my head still higher.

"Now I daresay you are seldom, if ever, ill, Miss Josephine," he went on.

"No," I replied; "I'm hardly ever ill. In fact I have never had a real illness in my life."

"Ah! Just what I thought. It does one good to see a girl taking healthy exercise. The women in India seem to think their legs are meant for anything but to walk with."

"But, surely," I asked, "they play tennis a great deal out there?"

"Oh! *Tennis!*" said Mr. Boscowen with contempt; "a most unnatural form of exercise for a woman. It makes me feel quite ill to see them rushing and striding about with red faces and dishevelled hair; and then the way they drink afterwards! I suppose you have never seen a lady drink a whiskey and soda, Miss Cameron?"

"No!" I exclaimed in a horrified tone, though I hardly knew what a whiskey and soda meant, but feeling sure from Mr. Boscowen's tone that it must be something they had no business to drink.

"Don't they ride a great deal in India?" I inquired rather

enviously, for there was nothing in the world I so longed to be able to do as to ride.

"Yes," said my companion in a tone that rather disappointed me, "they do, and a great deal too much, in my opinion. If I had my way a woman should never ride at all; if she is fond of riding she is certain to become horsey and unfeminine sooner or later, and, added to this, think of the extra expense she entails on her husband if she insists on keeping a horse for her own use! No; a woman's one object in life should be to study economy."

"But surely," I said, rather taken aback by this opinion, "she need not study economy unless she and her husband are badly off, or there happen to be reasons for saving money?"

"My dear child," said Mr. Boscawen with a parental air, "I know perfectly well what I am talking about. There are *always* reasons for saving money."

I supposed he must be right since he was so very positive on the subject, and I then began asking him questions about the place he was stationed at in India.

"It's a very small place," he informed me, "that is as regards the number of Europeans there; it's only a little civil station, but a very large district. However, I particularly applied for small head-quarters as I detest entertaining."

"But then, are you *obliged* to entertain?"

"Well, not obliged, perhaps; but in a large place it's expected of the collector, and he feels more or less bound to give dinners and tennis parties, so that people whom he neither knows nor cares twopence about may come and eat and drink at his expense, and go away and abuse him afterwards!"

I began to think people in India must have queer manners, and Mr. Boscawen had got so red in the face, and seemed so angry, that I hardly knew what to say next; every subject I selected seemed to be the wrong one.

However he went on by himself.

"I've got an enormous house at Kuttahpore, much too big for a single man, but it wouldn't altogether do for me in my position to take a small one, and I hope——"

Just then Mr. and Mrs. Carey came to a halt to admire the view and we continued our walk in a single row, which we preserved unbroken till we got back to the Vicarage, the conversation on the way being monopolized by Mrs. Carey, who held

forth at length on the subject of her children's future education, Mr. Boscawen arguing and contradicting while Mr. Carey and I walked on either side of them listening in silence.

CHAPTER VI.

A PROPOSAL BY PROXY.

"And marriage off-hand was his proffer,
I never loot on that I kenn'd it or cared,
And thocht I might hae a waur offer."

—Scotch Ballad.

DURING the next fortnight I saw a good deal of the rectory inmates as Mrs. Carey constantly asked me over, either to luncheon or to spend the evening, and Mr. Boscawen came several times himself to fetch me from Ivy Villa and always escorted me back there.

I still liked, and looked up to him very much, though now and then he said little things that made me inclined to doubt whether he was quite so clever or large-minded as I had imagined him to be. However, I put this down to my complete ignorance and want of experience of human nature, and blamed myself on these occasions for presuming to criticize one who was so much my superior in age and knowledge of the world.

Aunt Addie was delighted at the Careys taking me up to such an extent, and allowed me to go there whenever I was asked.

She happened to be in a specially amiable frame of mind at that time; which I put down to the departure of Tom, which happened in this way. For two or three days Tom had been very quiet, a fact which in itself showed that there was something wrong with him; he stayed in bed or moped about the house with a miserable expression on his face, and finally one morning came downstairs with a cough, looking yellow and bilious, and was excessively disagreeable and bad-tempered.

Aunt Addie was in despair.

"There, now," she said; "that boy is going to be ill! He *will* go out whenever I tell him not to, and this is the result. Now, if I have a sick-room on my hands it will finish me off altogether."

So the doctor was sent for, and Tom sat sulkily in the dining-room all the morning awaiting his arrival.

Out of compassion I went in to keep him company, but he did nothing but abuse everybody he could think of except the Barton family, refusing to go into the drawing-room because he said the sight of Aunt Addie would make him sick, and insisting that it was having to kiss her every night when he went to bed that had upset him and made him ill, and that he should certainly discontinue the practice.

Finding Tom in such a hopeless mood I chose the lesser of the two evils and went to Aunt Addie in the drawing-room, where I was still sitting when the doctor arrived.

"My nephew has caught cold somehow," explained Aunt Addie, "and I am so nervous that it will go through the house; it *may* be only throat, but I feel sure from the sound that it comes from his chest."

Just then we heard Tom come out of the dining-room barking loudly and aggressively.

"*There!*" said Aunt Addie, "listen! Now *does* that boy's cough come from his head or his heels?"

"From a happy medium, I should say," remarked the doctor grimly, and then Tom was called in and his pulse felt and his tongue looked at, when it was decided that all he required was a liberal dose of medicine and perhaps a change to more bracing air if it could be arranged.

So after a good deal of unnecessary fuss on Aunt Addie's part, Tom was given permission to seek his earthly paradise, otherwise "Barton's governor's place," which he did with alacrity, not attempting to conceal his relief and joy.

"It will be much better," said Aunt Addie, when he had departed, "if he *is* going to be ill for him to get it over there than here; but his journey is a great expense."

One evening, a few days after this, Mrs. Carey came to see Aunt Addie, who, as usual, was up-stairs in bed.

"Never mind, my dear," she said, when I offered to deliver any message she might wish conveyed; "I will go up and see her myself; I have something *very* particular to say to her."

Mrs. Carey's manner was the embodiment of mystery, and I waited downstairs wondering what was in the wind, for at least half an hour, at the end of which time she reappeared and asked me to sit down and talk to her for a few minutes, as she had something she wished to ask me.

I was consumed with curiosity, but was greatly disappointed when she merely inquired how old I was.

"I am between eighteen and nineteen," I answered.

Mrs. Carey shook her head gravely.

"You are dreadfully young, my dear," she said regretfully.

"I'm very sorry," I replied laughing, "but it's a fault I shall grow out of, I daresay."

But Mrs. Carey did not smile, her rosy pleasant face was full of anxiety and she looked almost beseechingly at me.

"Josephine, do you like my cousin Andrew?"

"Of course. I like him immensely. He is always so kind and nice to me."

"I know he is, dear. And now he has sent me to ask you a very important question; it's so important that I am almost afraid to say it."

"Good gracious!" I said, half frightened by her solemn tone. "What in the world is it?"

"He wants to marry you, child. And, oh, my dear, what am I to tell him? You see he *must* have an answer at once, his leave is so nearly up, but—"

"Wants to marry me!" I exclaimed breathlessly. "Do you *mean* it?"

"Oh, *yes*," cried Mrs. Carey nearly in tears, "and I *know* it would never do, you poor, dear child. I *told* him you would say no. I—"

"But I *don't* say no!" I answered, going over to Mrs. Carey and laying my hand on her shoulder. "I shall be only too delighted to marry him. Oh! Mrs. Carey, I shall go to India at last; think of it. What *could* have made him choose me, of all people?"

"That's just what I said myself," said Mrs. Carey, passing her hand over her brow as if she could not believe she had heard my answer aright. "I had no idea he would dream of such a thing, or I should never have thrown you in his way so much. I must say I never imagined you would accept him, but as you *have* done so I hope you will never live to blame *me*." She kissed me and her voice trembled with earnestness.

"Why should I?" I asked, kissing her back. "I think I am exceptionally lucky if only I could believe it was true, and I can't think why you look so grave over it."

"You are so young," she said doubtfully; "Andrew must be nearly twenty-four years older than you are. And you have seen so little of the world."

"What does that matter?" I said lightly. "I should never see it at all unless I married him. But what will Aunt Addie say?"

"That is what I have been talking to her about, and she gives her full consent if you are willing to accept him. Will you come back with me to the Vicarage, dear, and give Andrew his answer yourself, or would you rather think it over till to-morrow?"

"I will come now," I said without hesitation, and I flew upstairs two steps at a time to put on my things.

A few minutes later Mrs. Carey and I were walking rapidly down the road together. I felt as if I was treading on air as we left Ivy Villa behind us. Very soon I should be leaving it for good, and exchanging its monotonous little rooms for a palatial residence in India, with lofty ceilings and marble floors and armies of servants to do my bidding.

It need hardly be mentioned that my ideas of Indian life were as yet very vague, in spite of the many conversations Mr. Boscowen and I had had on the subject.

As we neared the Vicarage my heart began to beat violently and I felt extremely nervous. I trembled with shyness and hardly knew what I was doing till I found Mrs. Carey had deposited me in the dining-room and had gone away, closing the door behind her.

Presently Mr. Boscowen entered. I was standing by the mantelpiece, which I clutched convulsively with one hand, and he possessed himself of the other, which was hanging by my side.

"Well, Josephine," he began cheerfully, "and what are you going to say to me?"

"I don't know," I said stupidly, blushing, and feeling very uncomfortable.

"I think I know," said Mr. Boscowen confidently. "Shall I tell you?" I felt angry at his being so certain of my acceptance and yet I could think of nothing to say. "You're going to tell me that you will come back to India with me? Come, Josephine, don't frighten me, and make me think you are going to say no."

There was a shade of anxiety in his tone which was flattering to me in the extreme, so I raised my eyes to his and smiled.

Then an awful thing happened. Mr. Boscawen kissed me. I did not like it at all. To begin with, the kiss alighted on the tip of my nose, and his stubbly moustache pricked and scratched me, and altogether, though I could not have told why, I felt that I would much rather not have it happen again. To be engaged to Mr. Boscawen had seemed very delightful in anticipation, but the realization at the outset was disappointing.

"Why, you surely don't mind my kissing you, Josephine?" asked Mr. Boscawen laughing; "you'll have to get used to that, you know." And he seemed very much amused at the repugnance with which I had received his first caress.

"I can't get used to it all at once," I said rather ruefully.

"But, my dear child, you've got to *marry* me in a fortnight. Think of that!"

I gasped. The fact had temporarily escaped my mind that Mr. Boscawen was returning to India so soon.

"You won't have many preparations to make," he said lightly. "We are going to a very small station, where it won't be in the least necessary for you to have a great quantity of clothes."

"Yes," I said, wondering whether Aunt Addie would buy anything for me at all, and what I should do if she refused to interest herself in the matter.

"I'll come over to-morrow morning and have a talk with your aunt," said Mr. Boscawen; "things *must* be settled, our time is so short, and I'm not going back without you, young lady, I can tell you, so you had better make up your mind to become Mrs. Andrew Boscawen this day fortnight."

He laughed again, and dragged me down into a seat beside him, for I was still standing by the mantelpiece.

I felt bewildered. Everything had been so sudden, and the novelty and excitement of the whole event seemed to have dulled my brain and rendered me quite stupid. I did not like sitting so close to my future husband, and I felt as if I must scream aloud when he passed his hand over my hair and tried to kiss me again.

But presently I forgot this feeling, for he began to talk of India and how I should like the life, telling me I should be the principal lady in the station of Kuttahpore as his wife, describing the delights of tent-life during the cold weather when he marched all over his district, and assuring me that the hot weather was

not nearly so bad as it was painted, till I almost longed for the fortnight to be up, and the old craving to get away into the world began to rush over me again so forcibly as to stifle all other feelings.

CHAPTER VII.

WOOED AND MARRIED AND A'

"Hasty marriage seldom prooveth well."—*Shakespeare*.

CONTRARY to my expectations Aunt Addie rose to the occasion and evinced a certain amount of interest in the preparations for my wedding.

That is to say, she made no attempt to conceal her delight at the prospect of getting rid of me so easily, and gave fifty pounds into Mrs. Carey's hands, desiring her to get as much as she could for me with that amount, but by no means to exceed it. After which she contented herself with finding fault with everything we bought, and declaring that I looked a positive fright in whatever I tried on for her inspection.

Mr. Boscawen had presented himself at Ivy Villa the day after our engagement, and had obtained Aunt Addie's formal consent to our marriage, after which he and Mrs. Carey stayed to luncheon, and in the afternoon the three of us sallied forth to commence my shopping, as there was no time to be lost.

I enjoyed the shopping immensely, though nearly everything had to be bought ready made, a fact which Mrs. Carey greatly lamented, but which did not trouble me in the least. Everything seemed perfect in my eyes, and I had never possessed such clothes in my life before.

During the afternoon Mr. Boscawen took me into a jeweller's shop and requested the man to show him some rings.

"It seems hardly worth while to have an engagement ring at all, does it?" he remarked laughing, as we were entering the shop. "However, you won't feel properly engaged, I suppose, till you've got one on your finger?"

It occurred to me that perhaps he was hoping I should refuse the gift, but the next moment I felt ashamed of myself for dreaming of such a thing, and answered gratefully that I should be delighted to have one.

Boxes of glittering rings were laid out before us, and I gazed at them with the intense pleasure of a lover of pretty things, but Mr. Boscawen waved them aside.

"Not that class of thing," he said impatiently, "something much simpler."

The blazing diamonds and glowing rubies and emeralds were put away, and another box was produced containing some modest little pearl and sapphire rings.

"That's more the thing," said Mr. Boscawen, and he selected a little ring with five small pearls in it, and requested me to try it on.

It fitted me exactly, and as he was apparently well satisfied with the price, we left the shop with the ring still on my finger.

"I hope you like it, Josephine," said Mr. Boscawen when we were again in the street. "I would have bought you a diamond ring, only that I so much dislike seeing young girls with expensive jewelry about them. It looks so out of place."

I replied that I thought my ring very pretty indeed, and we were then captured by Mrs. Carey to come and choose some hats she had been investigating while we were at the jeweller's. It had been decided that I should go out of mourning, but no very gay colours were chosen for me. My wedding dress was a soft grey serge with a hat to match it. Mrs. Carey got me two simple evening dresses, a white and a black, and two neat morning dresses, and the rest of the money was spent in underclothing, trunks, and a warm cloak, Mr. Boscawen assuring us that I should find it very useful in India. All my clothes were necessarily inexpensive, but such as they were I was pleased with them. They fitted me well and looked fashionable and ladylike.

Until the morning of my wedding day I hardly ever saw Mr. Boscawen alone, so taken up were Mrs. Carey and myself with shopping and making necessary arrangements. I lived in a whirl of excitement; I had all a girl's love for "new things," and the hours flew by quickly that were spent in trying on hats and dresses, marking my clothes, and packing my new possessions.

Aunt Addie insisted on seeing me put on everything we had bought, and was loud in her complaints of our extravagance and bad taste; all of which Mrs. Carey bore most good-naturedly, merely remarking that as the things had been bought and paid for there was no drawing back, and that if Aunt Addie did not

like them, at any rate she would be spared the infliction of seeing me wear them.

"I should hope so!" she retorted, while I stood before her with a pale green hat trimmed with white ribbons on my head. "Who ever heard of such a thing as a green hat! and with that child's complexion, too; why, her face looks like a pat of butter in a cabbage leaf!"

Discouraging as the remark was, I could not help laughing, thereby rendering Aunt Addie crosser than ever, and drawing down showers of bitter reproaches on my head concerning my want of gratitude and my flippant, heartless disposition.

There was a great discussion as to whether Tom should be summoned to Ivy Villa for the wedding or not. I was not consulted in the matter, but had my opinion been asked I should certainly have implored them to leave him where he was.

However, Mrs. Carey seemed to think he ought to be present at the ceremony, and to my great disgust her counsel prevailed, and Tom arrived on the eve of my wedding day in aggressively restored health and noisier and more obnoxious than ever.

He treated me with a certain amount of unwilling respect, and seemed to think that hitherto he had been altogether mistaken in his estimate of my character.

"Come into the garden," he said when tea was over that evening, and as I had nothing to do, Mr. Boscawen being busy at the Vicarage making final arrangements, and my own things being packed and ready, I accompanied him on to the little grass plot at the side of the house.

"Well," he remarked, as we paced up and down, "so you'll be Mrs. Boscawen to-morrow."

"Yes, I believe so," I replied with calm superiority.

"How *did* you manage it?" asked Tom in a tone of curiosity.

"I didn't *manage it*, as you call it. Mr. Boscawen proposed to me and I accepted him, that's all."

"Oh!" said Tom, "I thought perhaps you proposed to him."

"You idiot!" I exclaimed angrily. "You know such things never happen."

"Oh! don't they? Well, all I can tell you is that Barton's eldest brother had to bolt to Jamaica because a girl kept on proposing to him! I was staying there at the time, and a fine old guy she was too. I don't wonder he bolted."

After indulging in a few more reminiscences of a like nature, he asked me where we meant to spend our honeymoon.

"We're going straight out to India; we're not going to have any wedding breakfast or anything. We drive to the station from the church."

I spoke rather regretfully, and Tom's indignation was quiet welcome.

"Well, that *is* mean!" he exclaimed; "and I promised I'd take some wedding cake back to Barton. Aren't you going to have even a cake?"

"No. What would be the use when we are not coming back here?"

"I thought you might take it away with you perhaps—or leave it for other people. *I* never heard of a wedding without a cake."

"I daresay you're much better without it," I remarked, by way of consolation; "you'd only over-eat yourself, and then think of Aunt Addie's feelings!"

"Is Aunt Addie coming to the wedding?" asked Tom, ignoring my last remark.

"Yes. And she says she means to have her bath chair wheeled up into the chancel, and sit in it all the time. She has to give me away, you know."

"Oh, Lord! how I *shall* laugh," said Tom, rubbing his hands. "I wonder if she'll have the hood up? Is any one going to give old curry-powder away?"

"To be his best man, you mean? Yes; some cousin of his was to have come down to-day from London, an old lawyer, I believe. Andrew said that as he was obliged to have him down on business he might as well get him to be his best man at the same time."

"Will your old chap give me a tip, do you think?" asked Tom anxiously.

"I should think not," I replied. "Why should he?"

"Oh! Well, when a fellow marries a chap's sister he ought to give him a sov. at the very least. Shall I give him a hint, or will you?"

"I certainly won't. You can do as you like, only you won't get it."

"We'll see," answered Tom knowingly, and then he repaired

to the house to hatch some scheme for squeezing a tip out of his future brother-in-law.

Mrs. Carey came to help me dress the next morning, and as Aunt Addie insisted on going to the church in her bath chair, declaring that "nothing would induce her to submit to the draughts of a cab," she started some time before Mrs. Carey and myself, who followed later in a carriage hired for the occasion. I cannot actually remember being married. It all seemed like a dream. I saw Aunt Addie, who had fulfilled her threat, and was calmly seated in her bath chair before the altar. I saw Mr. Boscawen, spruce and radiant, waiting for me, with a yellow dried-up man standing moodily by his side, and who proved to be the lawyer cousin best-man. I saw Mrs. Carey weeping quietly behind her veil, and heard Mr. Carey's melancholy voice droning out words I could not catch. Tom's face grinning from behind Aunt Addie's chair caught my eye, and the whole scene seemed to be enveloped in a sort of mist.

I kept wondering whether Mr. Boscawen was my husband yet or not, and it was all over and I was a married woman before I had realized that it had begun.

This was not at all what I had intended. I had resolved to walk firmly and majestically up the aisle as became my future position, whereas I am sure I almost ran.

I had intended to give my answers clearly and with great emphasis, but nobody heard them at all, and yet here I was safely Mrs. Andrew Boscawen, getting into the carriage with my husband and starting on my first stage towards India.

I had kissed Aunt Addie and Mrs. Carey cheerfully and wondered why the latter cried so, and just as the carriage door was shut Tom rushed up and, hanging on the step, loudly announced that the pew-opener had been forgotten and wanted "a tip."

"You can't give her less than a sov," he shouted as we began to move.

With a muttered exclamation my husband dived his hand into his pocket and threw half-a-crown into Tom's face.

"Good-bye," screamed Aunt Addie, waving her umbrella from her bath chair. "Mind you shut both the windows when you get into the train."

"All right," I yelled in reply, standing up in the carriage and

looking back, when I caught sight of Tom holding up the half-crown in glee and then consigning it to his pocket, which reminded me that he had declared he would get a tip out of Mr. Boscawen, and I therefore concluded that the pew-opener had meant nobody more or less than himself.

Then I leant luxuriously back in the carriage and tried to realize my situation.

Here I was with all the world before me. I believed I was rich and in a good position. I knew I was young and capable of the utmost enjoyment, and I meant to make the most of my youth and opportunities ; in fact I was somebody at last, and my days of obscurity and suppression were over.

(To be continued.)

Sal : Quite a Common Woman.

By GEORGE CALVERT.

TO begin with, Bill liked to start out for his Sunday afternoon in good spirits ; therefore he primed himself thoroughly beforehand. Then when the tram dropped them close to the Heath he was thirsty, as usual, and later on he feared it might rain ; and what place so suitable to take shelter in as the nearest public-house ? It didn't rain then, but that wasn't his fault, and it was too late to rectify the mistake. Half an hour later it did rain, smartly. The bar was small and stuffy, with a fine preserved odour of beer dregs and glass rinsings, unopened windows, damp humanity and much tobacco smoke : that produces thirst. Therefore when it cleared, Sal induced him to proceed more or less quietly to a secluded hollow of her acquaintance, where she sat herself down and with Bill's rabbit-skinned head upon her lap, set to work to possess her soul in patience until he should have slept it off ; *that was nothing new.*

Now there is not much stuff in a skirt even of the latest fashion of the Highway ; not much, that is to say, when the wearer is inside it and the mere tail remains to be spread out as a resting-place for a six-foot man. Amongst the Scotch firs on the hill, from the coarse grass around, from amidst the gorse bushes in the hollows where the bracken lay trampled down sodden and odorous, from the whole surface of the heath a cold clinging mist was rising for a foot or two above the ground—just high enough to wrap them both comfortably, she thought, with a shiver. The chill evening was closing in fast and she knew he must be getting soaked to the very bone ; but as to rousing him ! She'd tried it before, often ! She sat very still, so that his head should not roll off her lap, which it had a way of doing in a limp helpless fashion when she moved—and then he occasionally hit out, which was unpleasant—and her "gent" slept heavily on.

The women of her acquaintance (there were no girls in her neighbourhood, only a large number of careworn, worldly-wise old

women of ages varying from fifteen to twenty) had in their delicate chaffing way called him "Sal's gent," ever since an unlucky day when she rashly said with a touch of pride that he was or had once been one. "And 'ow did *she* know?" Well, because—because in some way he "was not as other Bills were;" at least she didn't say that, but something to that effect, which was quite enough—and a little too much, as she found out, for she never heard the last of it, not she! trust them for that! *They* couldn't see any difference, few people could have, but she said she did (only that once, though!), and what's more, she believed she did: and after all, if she didn't know him well, who in those parts was to? So Sal stuck to her "gent" despite ridicule: and he? Well, he was not unkind to her, not particularly; so long as she made enough by her work to provide him with a certain amount of food and an uncertain amount of drink and to pay the rent of their garret—no, he was not unkind according to the notions of the locality. And Sal? Sal abused him in public and private, screamed and swore at him with a remarkable vigour and fluency, kept him in everything by sewing herself half to death, cooked for him—and loved him better than anything else in her world; which is female human nature all over, though incomprehensible, and therefore by so much the more human nature.

And so, as she did everything for him, it wasn't anything out of the way to sit for a few hours on the wet grass through a cold evening till it pleased her Lord and Master to wake up, very chilly and very cross and—"why the —— didn't she wake him before?" and "—," and "—," and so on—and the journey home wasn't as pleasant as it might have been; not nearly!

Next morning Bill was ill and she was frightened. It was usual for him to be far from well on Monday morning, because he generally went holiday making (expressive phrase!) on the Sunday, on which day as we know it would be most shockingly irreligious for any theatre or place of that kind to be open, for the obvious reason that it is the occasion on which *οἱ πόλλοι* have most time to spare and ready money in pocket and might go there for amusement: perish the dreadful thought!!! But it wasn't usual for Sal to be frightened, that is unless he found something particularly ready to hand to throw at her; and even so it was only for a moment, as in spite of a fair amount of practice he was a most indifferent shot—but then it wasn't usual either for

Bill to tumble back again all in a heap, when he tried to rise from the wretched bed, and lie there groaning in such pain that he almost forgot to swear at her: that frightened her! She tried a little gin first to warm him up and he took it greedily, as he always did when he could get it, but it didn't seem to do him any good; she tried more, but that didn't either, so she threw a shawl about her head and went for a bottle of "mixture." There were two sorts kept on tap at the chemist's round the corner, one at 2d, light coloured, the other at 4d, dark. (I don't think there was much harm in them, I never heard of any bad effects, or any at all for that matter.) The more expensive one being the nastier, distinctly, she did not stick at the extra 2d. and returning full of faith—for it was not only most loathsome to taste but even to smell, and therefore *sure* to be good—administered it liberally. Not a bit of use! and one of Sal's most cherished beliefs was shattered for ever.

By evening Bill was cursing and raging in a high fever; before midnight he was delirious.

That night the rain pattered on the grimy glass and soaked through and trickled down in tiny streams where the broken panes were stuffed with mouldy rags or straw; the wind whistled drearily, tearing at and shaking the crazy casement, and moaned in in drifts currents beneath the rattling door; the solitary dip in its black bottle leaning dejectedly to one side guttered and flickered in its draughty corner; and Sal, tired out and shivering, for all her available garments were added to the dingy blanket that formed the only bedding, sat and listened to many strange things the like of which she had never heard before.

He babbled of the Mess and of parade, of horses and dogs, of friends and jests and frolics; of soft Winter mornings at the covert side; of the favourite's rush and the clamour of the Ring; of the rustling leaves and stubble trodden gaily under foot while the gun smoke drifted blue on the fresh Autumn air; of many a joyous day and merry night. And then in lower tones of a peaceful old-fashioned garden, sweet with the scent of cedar and of roses under a summer evening sky; of downcast eyes; of golden hair; of a whispered question and a low reply; of Earth made Heaven; of happy hopes and dreams. Once again, of ringing bit and stirrup iron; of a voyage, and a burning Eastern land; of the camp and the jungle; of the fall of the

stately *samburh* and the yellow gleam of a tawny striped skin through the tangled grass that clothed the nullah's side. Of time passing swiftly full of high aims, and drawing day by day towards a glowing future ; of a strong young life uncrossed by the shadow of a doubt or fear, until—! Of a letter, only a letter in a girlish hand ; of a murdered trust and a marred life ; of despair and recklessness ; of disgrace—and shame—and ruin !

And through it all, one refrain ; lovingly, proudly, despairingly, pitifully, over and over again, but always fondly—a woman's name !

It wasn't a bit like "Sal," it was a name she had never heard before ; and yet even when the strained voice ceased for a time, it rang in her ears and throbbed in her brain perpetually ; which was curious. It was curious too, that when in his delirium he threw his covering off and she leant over him to replace it—very tenderly, considering that tenderness was rather strange to her—two large hot drops should fall on his face ; very curious, not to say foolish ; but then, you see, Sal was only a woman and didn't know any better, and moreover hadn't passed a single standard of education ; couldn't even play the piano !!! It is a sad reflection that such poor creatures actually exist amongst us !

And it came to pass that Bill got worse—which was not unnatural under the circumstances—and absolutely declined to rally when the doctor was called in—too late, as usual—and died, which after all he would have had to do some time or other in any case.

* * * * *

On the evening of the day on which Bill was buried Sal sat alone in the empty room, thinking. She didn't often do it ; young ladies in her walk of life seldom do ; possibly because the daily struggle for bread takes up most of their time and leaves them too tired to do much but sleep, possibly because they mostly haven't anything particularly pleasant to think about ; but for once she did think, deeply, and about nothing more important than a little packet of letters.

The room was more bare than usual, which is saying a good deal ; the bed and sewing machine had once taken up a certain amount of space and they were gone. Something else was gone too, her employment ; not a great pecuniary success at the best

of times, but still a livelihood ; that had depended on the vanished machine. How the next day's food and the rent and other matters were to be got without it wasn't evident, but she never for a moment wished it back. Hadn't that and the bed and the rest of her portable property between them just sufficed to bury Bill "like a gentleman ?" Proud reflection!!! During the long hours that she had spent alone with the dead man the one prevailing thought in her mind had been that she *must* do that for him ; and according to her ability she did it. The West End might have smiled at the shabby hearse and solitary dingy coach, and at the desert corner of the far off suburban cemetery where they had laid him in the cheapest grave, but she had done her best.

She had not a penny in her pocket—it was worse than when Bill had sometimes managed to annex all her weekly wages on Saturday night and proceeded straightway to expend the lot in one glorious spree ; for then she had been able to borrow a trifle on account of her next week's earnings. She had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours, and was feeling sick and ill, when on coming back from the funeral a neighbour, who had helped the undertaker's man, placed in her hands a little packet taken at the last moment from the dead man's breast. She unfastened the oil silk wrapper in which it was cased and found—nothing but a bundle of old letters, about which there still hung a faint, sweet, scent, and a withered rose.

She knew what they were. Ah! yes ; she knew well enough The last words on Bill's lips had been—that other name.

Her first impulse was to tear them to pieces and trample them under foot ; her second, to find out their contents. Some one must read them to her, she could not spell out a single word herself ; but a sudden thought struck her ! It was a sore temptation, but there came across her a vague sort of feeling that—well, that—perhaps Bill would rather that no eye but his should read them. Very absurd and ridiculous indeed ; in fact, quite childish of her ; but then, as I have said, Sal was quite without education. The fact remains that she did not even undo the faded ribbon that bound them, but tied up shrivelled flower and unread letters once more in their outer wrapper, carefully : then she sat down in her empty room and cried. Foolish Sal !

She thought of a great deal as she sat there staring unseeingly at the blank dampstained wall. She would have gazed

into the depths of the glowing coals, no doubt, which is the conventional thing to do under the circumstances, but there weren't any glowing coals to gaze into ; her fire like her food and furniture was buried in a newly-made grave five long miles away. True, the wall answered for all practical purposes just as well for staring at, but it didn't warm her, and it was a bitter night. She did not go to bed, for the excellent reason that there was no bed to go to ; she could not sleep, she was too chill and miserable ; she only sat there and thought—thought—thought—through the long evening and into the small hours of the morning with the packet in her hand ; then, rising, thrust it into her bosom, and trembling with cold and exhaustion, went out wearily into the driving storm.

What are five miles ? Nothing at all, as everybody knows ; a mere pleasant walk—no more ; and, therefore, it was unnecessary for her to take so long about them and drag along so feebly and slowly. True it was a wild night, a pitiless cruel night, with a rushing icy blast that almost tore the thin shawl from her shoulders and bound her dripping rags straitly around her trembling knees as she staggered against it gasping for breath ; a boot got left behind too—what there was of it—and her foot was torn and bleeding ; perhaps these can be hardly called her fault. But to faint ! to faint and, falling, cut her face open upon a stone ! Surely she had no one but herself to thank for that ? It was most reprehensible. Did it not give a watchful policeman all the trouble of debating in his legal mind whether he should run her in for drunkenness or only move her on, of shaking her roughly by the shoulder and flashing his bullseye in her eyes ? Luckily that, and a sharper gust of sleet than usual stinging her face, brought her round sufficiently to limp painfully on and leave him still reflecting. And then to sit down ; to actually sit down in a public thoroughfare close to the gates of a great City of the Dead to await their opening to admit the early workmen, and sitting there in the grey light of the slow winter dawn, to go off again into a death-like swoon ! Surely no woman with any sense of decency or propriety could have done such a thing. I fear Sal must have been a very common woman indeed ! And then to creep, in and seeking out one freshly turned mound, to scrape and dig with feeble hands amongst the sodden clods till she had made a tiny foot-deep grave above the dead face lying

quiet below ; to kiss a little packet drawn from her breast and, laying it gently there, cover it carefully and throw herself upon the soaking clay in an agony of tears and sobs ! How unpractical ! How very old-fashioned ! The ground-keeper heard and turned away, it was only a woman crying ! What was that to him ? Nothing ! What is that to us in this charmingly advanced and scientific Nineteenth Century existence of ours, a woman crying ? Pooh ! nothing at all. Less than nothing. So she lay there undisturbed.

I wonder if Some One heard the bitter cry that burst from the lips pressed to the wet earth : "Oh, Bill ! *my* Bill ! say *my* name too !"

Perhaps so ! But—you see Sal was a *very* common woman !

Some Ways of the World : Bygone and Present.

By W. W. FENN.

NO. IV.

OF course critics and censors have a fine time for firing their shafts of satire at the garrulity of age, whenever elderly people begin to prate of "what they can remember." They quote Dogberry, and say as that sapient potentate says of Verges in excuse for his friend having made a remark, "An old man! sir, he will be talking," and then the reviewer, according to his temper, deals more or less gently with the matter under his notice. So be it—the "cant of criticism," as Dr. Johnson calls it, must have its fling—the public expect it, and whether they like it or not, they put up with it, and what should be a consolation to an unlucky author who smarts under it, the public read his book or article perhaps the more readily because of it. Especially is this the case nowadays should the book or article be one of reminiscences, and readers eagerly turn to records of that part which happens to tell of times and people immediately preceding their own personal experiences. More genuine interest is excited by accounts of the last sixty years I believe, amongst ordinary mortals, than by mediæval or ancient history, judging by the sale of recent literary excursions in the first direction. We need not go to books only, to see how details of life as it has wagged since the time when, say, railroads were introduced, to be convinced of the pleasure derived from personal reminiscences.

Thus we read, that some years ago, Sir John Millais, R.A., finding himself called on to address the students at the School of Art in Sheffield, instead of giving them a conventional speech, broke out into a piece of autobiography to the delight of his listeners.

Sir John's retrospect went back fifty years to a day when his mother—to whom he declared he "owed everything"—brought him from Jersey to London. They came by coach from Southampton, and the driver indulged in many derisive remarks

about the railway—then in course of construction. Public opinion on the top of the stage coach was entirely with him, thinking the iron horse would never prove a success. As the vehicle drew near the Metropolis, young John Millais saw with wonder the red cloud of glare hanging over the still distant capital. He asked what this phenomenon meant, and was answered by his mother, "My boy! those are the lights of London." The first memorable sight he saw in the Metropolis was the horse guards, with the gigantic cavalry men posted as ever on either side of the entrance. The second was the awful presence of Sir Martin Archer Shee, the then President of the Royal Academy; for Millais' parents had brought up their boy, along with his drawings, to obtain from this high authority a decisive opinion as to the propriety of educating him for the easel and palette. The interview, as Sir John described it, was very characteristic. The proud, but sensible mother told how their neighbours and friends in Jersey thought greatly of John's talents; but said she would not trust the opinion of friends, and had come to ascertain from the best source whether it would be prudent to bring him up as an artist. The first remark made by Sir Martin Shee was, "Madam, you had better bring your boy up to be a chimney-sweeper." The boy's drawings, however, were fetched from the hall and opened and inspected by the President. After giving the sketches some careful attention, the President turned to the lad, placed his hand upon his head, and looked him steadfastly in the face, saying, "You did all these drawings by yourself, my little man?" He was too frightened to answer, but the President evidently thought he was not an impostor, for addressing his mother, he said, emphatically, "Madam, it is your duty to bring this boy up to the profession!"—and so a painter little "Johnny Millais" became. He then recited with much gusto, various experiences of student life, and spoke also of some disappointments, which, however, were neither numerous nor considerable, for the boy was, as every one knows, made of the stuff which succeeds, and now from the top of the ladder of modern British art, looks down with a smile upon those far-off days when he was sent out daily to buy buns for his fellow-students. The fresh and almost boyish spirit which animates these confidences, and still distinguishes the eminent artist, was just the gift to help his innate powers of invention and colour to

come to the front. He and the railways were equally novelties half a century ago, and equally sure to "go far" as the French say.

A great many other entertaining and interesting details are furnished by this piece of autobiography, notably the advantages which John Millais derived, not so much from his professors, but from his comrades and fellow students. Sir John also paid a richly deserved tribute to the illustrative work of our time instancing the names of Tenniel, Du Maurier, Keene, and others.

The pith of it all, however, for the budding artists listening to the famous painter, was that night ride into London town, and the beginning of the struggle for fame and success of which every youthful heart dreams with blended anxiety and eagerness.

How many aspirants, at the same date or since, have similarly approached the outskirts of the mighty city, and seen the crimson glow overhanging it, with feelings of fear and hope alternately filling their breasts? The greater number of them, beyond doubt, entertained no serious misgivings about their triumph. The crimson glow was for most of them a "pillar of fire," leading and beckoning their footsteps. Like the hero of "Locksley Hall," their spirits burned within them, in a sort of reflection of the city's crown of flame, to rush into its conflict

"Underneath the light they look at, in among the throngs of men.
Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new;
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do."

In this regard the Ways of the World remain unchanged. From time immemorial, since the existence of great capitals, they have ever had a magnetic attraction for the young, the energetic, and the adventurous, and so to the end of the world the principle will remain. Only is it in the method by which they are reached that any difference between the bygone and the present exists, but never before in the history of recorded time has there been seen such a vast and gigantic loadstone as this London of ours presents to-day. The prodigious city which Queen Elizabeth considered too big, has yet gone on growing from the village which it was when she sat upon the throne, into the mighty province which we now behold. It is not strange, therefore, that the size of the area, the endless opportunities for success which it appears to offer, should attract, or that the fanciful expression

of "streets paved with gold," should seem to be literally true. Well, however, would it be before entering beneath that alluring midnight glow, if pilgrims who make for it with a view to finding in it openings for their enterprise, should pause. They should remember that unless they come to it with some definite notion of what they are going to do, or with some definite opening ready for them to fill, they stand but a poor chance. For one who, like Sir John Millais, reaches the top of the ladder, a dozen scarcely get their foot upon the lowest rung, whilst hundreds fail to arrive even at the foot of the ascent, and are left to founder in the depths of despair, or to grovel amidst the dust for the rest of their lives. London has no pity for the unsuccessful. She is too busy to inquire into the cause of failure and, what is worse, she does not care much to know when she is told. Her ways in this regard also remain unchanged.

But enough of these oft-repeated truisms. They seldom affect the minds of most of those who should most closely lay them to heart; for, as Bulwer wrote fifty years ago, "the lexicon of youth which Fate prepares for a bright manhood has no such word as fail." And thus once more human nature may be expected to go on to the end of the world pretty much as it ever has done.

Turn we then our steps to some less beaten paths and jog along some more definitely conspicuous bygone ways. One of these I am reminded by the above reference to art, is that of literature, and especially that branch of it which refers to fiction. Very different indeed is the state of affairs here at this end of the century to that which it was at the beginning, and even up to twenty or thirty years ago. When the year 1800 had reached its teens, Sir Walter Scott opened up his vast store of genius, and by the invention of his gifted mind developed an entirely new sort of novel. Hosts of imitators followed in the same key, though at a very long distance, and both at home and abroad the public were delighted and amused with those thrilling romances, which, though still esteemed as standard works, are, we fear, seldom, by comparison, taken down from their shelves by the youth of the present day.

"We are told that in the bygone era, when Dumas's 'Monte Cristo' and Eugène Sue's 'Mysteries of Paris' formed the great literary successes of the day," said a contemporaneous writer who knew the time, "the favourite hero of romance was a

mysterious autocrat, possessed of boundless resources, unlimited power and supernatural intelligence. This dispenser of good and evil went through the world as a sort of mundane Providence, punishing crime, protecting innocence and rewarding virtue ; his punishments, protections and rewards being one and all conferred in some occult and unintelligible fashion. One of the peculiarities of those heroes of fiction was that they themselves seldom appeared before the world, that they carried out their domination through the agency of subordinates, and that they remained hidden from the public gaze, save on some rare occasion when they stepped forward to thwart crime and to expose villainy.

"Of late years this type of romance has gone somewhat out of fashion. Our faith has been so rudely shaken in so many respects that we have even ceased to believe in the omnipresence or omnipotence of police agents. The Vautrin of Balzac and the M. Le Coq of Gaboriau, are characters which seem out of place in the world, as we in England know it at the close of the century. Those who want to find a scene in which such creations as the ordinary ideals of detective fiction would not seem utterly out of harmony with the workaday world, must look for it in countries which, while enjoying all the appearances of modern civilization, have yet only partially emerged from barbarism. Russia fulfils these conditions more fully than any other European country, and the borderland between the west and east is the site on which any writer of fiction who wished to revive the traditions of the Veiled Prophet, would do well to place the action of his drama. All readers of Tourguenieff and Tolstoi must have been struck by the part which the secret police play in their novels. The personages of their stories move and have their being according to the instincts of their nature."

These observations, and many similar, came from the pen of a reviewer when touching on one phase of comparatively modern fiction. And now even the detective of ten or fifteen years back is gone. He seldom figures in romances up to date, so that when we survey the literary side of the century, from Scott to George Meredith, we see in this trifling item alone how vast has been the transformation in taste and fashion of both authors and readers.

No less again are they apparent in the world theatrical, and the taste of the public which, say in 1800 up to 1850, still clung to the legitimate drama, as it was called, has now abandoned it as the staple of their entertainment.

"When all the world was young, lad,
And all the trees were green,
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen,"

things certainly all round were vastly different both behind and in front of the footlights. Behind, the social form of domestic drama, the farcical comedy, the ramping, raving burlesque, take the place of Shakespeare and the Muses—save always in such isolated cases as those with which the public is sufficiently familiar. It fortunately has still enough good sense left to appreciate and patronize fine acting whenever found ; and its fantastic affectations, and the liberal patronage it bestows on frivolities and ephemeral fooling, must not be counted as expressing the real taste and feeling of the nation : whilst the care and finish bestowed on the details of all plays, whether good or bad, if a little overdone at times perhaps, is surely an enormous improvement upon the slip-shod, happy-go-lucky staging which formed the background for the work of the greatest actors England has known. So if the blank verse play is seen a little less often than one could wish, the modern ways of the world offer considerable compensation, and when we turn to the "front of the house," there is to be seen, I fancy, more than enough to stifle all regret for former fashions. William Charles Macready is to be everlastingly thanked for having taken the initial steps in cleansing the temples of the Muses from the abominations of the saloons, and the disgraceful behaviour which was nightly witnessed in the upper boxes of Drury Lane, Covent Garden and the Haymarket. The memory of the great actor will be revered, and the effect of his domestic legislation will be felt by generations who can only hear and know from tradition of what his powers were in the art he followed and adorned.

Despite the fact that the magic and alluring words, " Half Price at Nine O'clock," no longer arrest the gaze of the play-goer, as strolling homewards he wishes for an hour's entertainment at a cheap rate, ere he seeks what Mr. Richard Swiveller calls " the

downy," compensation is again offered to this individual by "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay" and the like, in a half-a-dozen places, where, in addition to amusement, he is now permitted to indulge in "the rosy" (to quote the immortal Dick again), and to "blow the cloud," as the great authority would have dubbed the nicotian weed, had smoking been the custom, and not the exception, in his day. That "Half Price," however, had a charm, and one remembers with a pang those nights when you could slip into the pit for a shilling, and see the end of the tragedy or drama, followed by "Box and Cox," with Harley, Compton, Keeley, or Buckstone delineating, with an exquisite refinement of drollery, the illustrious hatter and the eminent printer. But "all, all are gone! the old familiar faces," and many of the places—that is to say, the pit-places; for have we not now the sumptuous stalls monopolizing those much-coveted front rows? Ah! the stalls! What a host of memories surround the days when they were not! Fancy the time when no stalls were to be seen in theatres except at the opera. Why, the whole aspect of our leading theatres was entirely different, and, "between you and I and de *Morning Post*," as Madame Celeste used to say at the Adelphi, did not present half so agreeable a spectacle as modern ways have brought into view. "Verily, fashion is a deformed thief," to quote Dogberry once more, and the tenacity with which he haunts the ways of the world everywhere at all seasons, might warrant our dubbing him the highwayman of all time.

From highwaymen to smugglers is not a far jump, and if we take it we find ourselves landed on a way of the world which opens up to view another vast perspective of change from bygone to present well worth looking at. Thackeray has somewhere said that the quantity of books which have been written is but small compared with the number that might be written. As a subject for one of these latter, I do not believe there is a better than that offered by the infinite variety of smugglers' dodges.

The profession plied by Dirk Hatteraick has, indeed, become a lost art since the day when the revision of our Customs tariff left but two or three dutiable articles of import out of which they could make a profit, when, he ran his boat, heavily laden with them, into an out-of-the-way creek by night. Perhaps there is nothing that would more surprise those of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers who lived upon the coast at the end of last

and the commencement of this century, could they but arise from their tombs, than the entire disappearance of smugglers from the haunts frequented by their predecessors when George III. was king. In the opening passage of his interesting "Memoirs of an ex-Minister," Lord Malmesbury, an octogenarian, tells us that his childhood was chiefly passed at Heron Court, near Christchurch—an old manor-house which stands low among ancient elms, within a mile of three rivers, the Stour, the Avon, and the Herne, the waters of which meet in Christchurch Bay. During the long war between Great Britain and France, the whole of the wild country extending in an uncultivated state from Christchurch to Poole—the country now mainly covered by the flourishing health resort of Bournemouth and its suburbs—was infested by smugglers. One day in 1780, the grandfather of the present Earl of Shaftesbury was sitting at his mid-day meal in the hall at Heron Court, which then belonged to Mr. Edward Hooper, who died in 1795, and bequeathed the place to Lord Malmesbury's grandfather. The high road, which has since been turned, passed then by the front door of the house. Suddenly the host and his guest were disturbed by the clatter of waggons, six or seven in number, hastily driven past the window. They were full of barrels containing French brandy, and the horses attached to them rushed by at a gallop. Lord Shaftesbury jumped up to look at the sight, but old Squire Hooper sat still, not thinking it worth while to take notice of so ordinary an occurrence. Soon after, a detachment of cavalry rode up and asked which way the smugglers had gone. No one was willing to give the soldiers any information, a fact which plainly shows that the sympathy even of the upper classes was with the lawless defrauders of the revenue. The refugees escaped, doubtless, with their booty into the New Forest. Lord Malmesbury adds that, early in the century, he was himself birdnesting in a copse close to Heron Court, when he was seized by a rough fellow, who promised to let him go in an hour if he made no noise and offered no resistance. When released, Lord Malmesbury, then a boy, was compelled to swear that he would not reveal what had happened to him. "And when I got home," he says, "after my long absence, I did not betray the man or his comrades whom I saw in the copse hiding kegs of brandy."

"The smuggler," remarks Ford, in his "Hand-book to Spain,"

"is the corrector or adjuster of the bungling chancellors of the exchequer." In recent times fiscal ministers of this country have discovered that the only effectual cure for smuggling is an almost unprohibitive tariff. Things were very different, however, when Mr. Pitt and his successors were at their wits' end to devise new sources of revenue. High protective tariffs were invented to prevent the belligerents from exchanging industries, but no prohibitory legislation sufficed to keep goods out of two countries. It was in vain that the great Napoleon strove to injure, and, indeed, to kill the trade of Great Britain, by promulgating the Berlin and Milan decrees for closing all continental ports against British shipping. British goods were landed on the shores of Eastern Europe, were conveyed on horseback through Hungary to Vienna, and thence distributed in all directions. French manufactures, and French brandy in particular, also found their way into England by all sorts of circuitous routes. Sometimes they took a year in transit from Smyrna, and sometimes two years by way of Archangel. The profits realized by the bold and skilful conductors of contraband traffic were exceedingly great. In order to check it, the British government expended vast sums annually in maintaining a coastguard and preventive service; but so long as much-coveted smuggled goods, like French wines, brandies, laces and silks, or like Cuban and Turkish tobacco, were sold at far lower prices than similar commodities which had been lawfully imported, it was impossible to suppress the illicit traffic. It should never be forgotten that in every part of the world, and especially in Scotland, Ireland, and all Celtic countries, the sympathy of dwellers on the coast was invariably with the smuggler. When stern necessity compelled Robert Burns to become "a gauger," he indemnified himself for the unpopularity, which, as he well knew, attached to his office, by writing one of his most humorous songs, commencing, "The *de'il* cam' fiddlin' thro' the town, and danced awa' the exciseman." No reader of "Guy Mannering" can have forgotten the matchless description of Ellangowan Bay, to which Dirk Hatterack's sloop was a constant visitor. In the first interview between that worthy and Colonel Mannering, the former proclaims himself "captain of the 'Jungfrau.' A craft well known on this coast," he adds, "and I am not ashamed of my name, or my vessel, or, for that matter, of my cargo either. Tousand donner! I am all in

the way of fair trade, and have just landed from Douglas, in the Isle of Man, neat cognac, real Hyson and Souchong, and Mechlin lace, if you want any. Right good cognac, I tell you—we bumped a hundred kegs ashore last night." Sir Walter Scott leaves us in no doubt that Dirk and his bold crew were regarded with much greater favour by the local inhabitants than the gaugers who strove to capture the marauders, or than Gilbert Glossin, before whom, as a magistrate, the smugglers were brought. When Kennedy, the most active of preventive officers, was murdered and thrown over the cliff, the place was thence-forward known as "the gauger's leap." With Sir Walter Scott the romance of smuggling expired. Nowadays there are none of the picturesque accessories of the contraband trade which once invested every cavern, cliff, creek and copse on the coast of these islands with poetic interest. Instead of a run by night in an open boat, from the French coast to the shores of Hampshire, Sussex, Essex, or Kent, we have to content ourselves in these prosaic times with petty attempts to cheat the revenue, for which women are more frequently responsible than men. Such an incident once happened at Belfast, where an Irishwoman, named Mary MacMahon, was brought to the police-court, charged for keeping whiskey on premises which were unlicensed. Sergeant Jones deposed that he went into the defendant's house and found a woman named Grayton, who was seated before the fire. Upon searching her, the sergeant came upon thirty-six bottles of porter and two bottles of whiskey, stowed away in her petticoats. To the inexpressible amusement of the spectators, the sergeant produced the peccant garments in court. Each petticoat was made of coarse sacking, and was girt with innumerable pockets, all of them lined with soft materials, so as to keep the bottles from clinking, and possibly breaking each other. Unhappily for poor Mary MacMahon, the petticoats, whiskey and porter were confiscated by the relentless police magistrate, and the chief delinquent was sent to gaol for three months. I entertain no doubt that the hearty sympathies of nine-tenths of those present in court went with Mary MacMahon to limbo. There has, we fear, never been a time in Scotland or Ireland when surreptitious potheen and mountain dew which never paid a bawbee to the State exchequer, did not, like stolen kisses, taste the sweeter because of their clandestine birth. He, however, who would fain find

amusing stories about running the blockade, and smuggling contraband of war through an enemy's lines, may turn with advantage to many Transatlantic magazines which teem with articles revealing the illicit trade carried on during the American Civil War. Ladies of the Bell Boyd and Mrs. Greenhow type were caught trying to make their way down South, with countless boxes of copper caps and packages of quinine stitched into their crinolines. Captain Roberts, better known under his real name, Hobart Pasha, tells us that he smuggled vast quantities of Cockle's pills into Secessia, but that the Southerners, differing in taste from the lamented Colonel Fred Burnaby, would have none of them. A certain young lady, who appeared to be in delicate health, took ship at New York for Havannah, whence she hoped to run the blockade into Mobile. Overpowered by sea-sickness during the voyage, she could not prevent the stewardess from discovering that she was girt round about with linen bandages, among which many costly drugs were stowed. Such is the complexion to which modern smuggling has come at last. Our coastguards have no preventive duties to perform, and their only *raison d'être* is to watch that no foreign foe makes a descent on our coasts. The Dirk Hatteraicks of the past are as dead as the pirates of the Captain Cleveland order, and in their stead petty larceny revenue cheaters like Mary MacMahon have sprung into existence.

By drawing thus largely as I have done in many of the foregoing pages on the writing and experience of various authors, one is enabled to get glimpses of some bygone ways, which may not, it seems to me, be attainable by any other method, at any rate in magazine articles of this present length and scope. Treated in this fashion, records of the ways of the world cannot fail to become interesting to all sorts and conditions of men. They set us moralizing, too, for they show conspicuously how very small a portion of the road can be covered even by the longest life of one individual. He can but, at the best, touch here and there certain milestones and landmarks on the way, as he jogs along his own beaten path, with his own feeble footsteps. The finger-posts he personally passes, lead off into so many tracks and lanes, that were he to try himself to follow them out to their ultimate issues, he would so hopelessly get off the road he is destined to travel, that he must inevitably be lost in a wilderness of confusion, which it would take three or four lifetimes to hark back from. No, we

can only take a peep down this or that byway through the *pincenez* or field-glasses of others, as we pause for a moment at its point of junction. Those who have gone far down it themselves, as the road Fate ordains for them, with an eye to its beauty, its interests, and its characteristic details, generally leave behind them sufficiently vivid sketches to satisfy the curiosity of such travellers, who, having but little time, and less inclination, to go out of their way, yet desire a cursory acquaintance with the ways of the world beyond their reach.

Such a peep is to be obtained through the gold-rimmed spectacles of the late Mr. Anthony Trollope, than whom no more able or graphic observer ever travelled from Dan to Beersheba. See, for instance, what his experience of coaching helps us to know of the Australian method. "A Victorian coach," he remarks, "with six or eight horses attached, making its way at dead of night through a thickly-timbered forest, at the rate of nine miles an hour, with the wheels running in and out of holes four or five feet deep, is a phenomenon which I should like to have shown to some of those neat and dandified mail-coach drivers whom I used to know at home in the old days." It would be impossible to point to any one better able to indicate the contrast presented in England by the ways of the world when the versatile and accomplished author of the "Chronicles of Barchester" entered the service of the General Post Office in 1834, and that which was to be seen when he first visited the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Queensland. In 1840, he tells us, in effect, that he had the good luck—as he considered it, and as it proved in his case—to be transferred in his official capacity from England to Ireland, and his experience of rough roads in the Emerald Isle must have prepared him for what he subsequently endured in the Western States of America and at the Antipodes. In each of these latter countries, he saw feats of driving performed, which, but for his own ocular evidence to the contrary, he declares he would have deemed incredible, and the contrast drawn by him between "Cobb"—the name by which the stage coach of the Australian colonies is generally known, no matter who owns the vehicle,—and Bianconi, whose memory will long live in Ireland by reason of his connection with the cars and stages of that eccentric island, is in Mr. Trollope's best manner. Few Englishmen, however, are now living, to whom the White

Horse Cellars, otherwise called Hatchett's Hotel, in Piccadilly, would recall more pregnant recollections than to the popular and prolific novelist who breathed his last in December, 1882. He loved to narrate to his friends a story of a night journey from the White Horse Cellars to Bath, which he took while still little more than a boy. The Reform Bill of 1832 had not long been passed, and railways were still a thing of the future. "The road," however, was then at the zenith of its fame, and, seated behind one of those celebrated whips, whose prowess is recorded by "Nimrod" in his well-known *Quarterly Review* article, Mr. Trollope was initiated into the mysteries of coaching, and the names and peculiarities of the enterprising contractors by whom the Quicksilver Mail, the Brighton Age, the Exeter Telegraph, and the Chester Highflyer, were respectively horsed. There was no great highway in England round which more stories clustered than the Western road, which led through Bath to Bristol and Exeter. Captain Bastard, whose death has recently taken place, used to stand at the end of Arlington Street, or at the top of St. James's Street, and, looking across the way, to recite in the ear of a congenial friend the stirring and active scenes which he had witnessed at the White Horse Cellars when first he joined the Blues half a century before. Many a famous mail coach, having started with its load of letters from St. Martin's-le-Grand, paused at the popular hostelry in Piccadilly to pick up some fashionable passenger, whose seat upon the box had been booked many days before. In those times it was regarded as a prodigy that the Exeter mail should cover the one hundred and seventy-five miles between the Metropolis and the capital of Devonshire in seventeen hours.

And now, with those days, has passed away the very hostelry itself, and, oh! shade of our ancestors! a brand-new French hotel, forsooth, stands on the site. In place of the British patron of the road, the buck of the box, the Corinthian in his many-caped top-coat, we find the ground occupied by "le sport-mans," with his spruce and flattering adoption of our English modes.

Notwithstanding some sentimental regret which must ever accompany the demolition of an old land-mark like Hatchett's, no one, in his senses, can gainsay the advantage of our increased intimacy with our neighbours across the Channel, for it brings about a happy interchange of good feeling, and instead of the

angry and ignorant animosities existing in the old time between Gaul and Britain, we have that *entente cordiale* which finds expression on the lips of the foreigner, when he dons a truly anglicized rig-out, in the cry of "Old England for ever!"

In his account of a certain memorable journey from Salisbury to London, made by Mr. Pecksniff and his two amiable daughters, his biographer tells us that when they got into the Salisbury coach at the end of the lane, "they found it empty, which was a great comfort; particularly as the outside was quite full and the passengers looked very frosty. For as Mr. Pecksniff justly observed—when he and his daughters had burrowed their feet deep in the straw, wrapped themselves to the chin, and pulled up both windows—it is always satisfactory to feel, in keen weather, that many other people are not as warm as you are. And this, he said, was quite natural, and a very beautiful arrangement; not confined to coaches, but extending itself into many social ramifications. 'For,' he observed, 'if every one were warm and well-fed, we should lose the satisfaction of admiring the fortitude with which certain conditions of men bear cold and hunger, and if we were no better off than anybody else, what would become of our sense of gratitude; which,' said Mr. Pecksniff with tears in his eyes, as he shook his fist at a beggar who wanted to get up behind, 'is one of the holiest feelings of our common nature.'

"His children heard with becoming reverence these moral precepts from the lips of their father, and signified their acquiescence in the same, by smiles. That he might the better feed and cherish that sacred flame of gratitude in his breast, Mr. Pecksniff remarked that he would trouble his eldest daughter, even in this early stage of their journey, for the brandy-bottle; and from the narrow neck of that stone vessel, he imbibed a copious refreshment.

"'What are we,' said Mr. Pecksniff, 'but coaches? Some of us are slow coaches.'

"'Goodness, pa!' cried Charity.

"'Some of us, I say,' resumed her parent with increased emphasis, 'are slow coaches; some of us are fast coaches. Our passions are the horses; and rampant animals too.'

"'Really, pa!' cried both the daughters at once. 'How very unpleasant.'

"‘And rampant animals too!’ repeated Mr. Pecksniff, with so much determination, that he may be said to have exhibited, at the moment, a sort of moral rampancy himself; ‘and virtue is the drag. We start from the mother’s arms, and we run to the dust shovel.’

“When he had said this, Mr. Pecksniff, being exhausted, took some further refreshment. When he had done that, he corked the bottle tight, with the air of a man who had effectually corked the subject also; and went to sleep for three stages.”

Well, well! most of us may have been asleep for more than three stages since then, but those who have been able to keep wide awake through life’s journey, up to the present hour, will certainly see that now we are all “fast coaches.” Life spins along at railway speed universally, and if in some cases it must still be admitted that it is the pace that kills, in the main our arrival at the Dust Shovel is very considerably retarded. Not a few of our brethren who in bygone times would have to vacate their seats at the end of a fifty years’ journey, do not now think of abdicating the box until they have occupied it for a good round eighty. No, on the whole, sensible men will join in chorus with Sidney Smith, and echo with him the lines:

“The good of ancient times let others state;
I think it lucky I was born so late.”

The Song of Love.

THE Ladye stood in armoured hall,
Her lover by her side ;
A sword she drew from bannered wall
With mingled pain and pride.
" Well proved at Tournay and at Tilt,
This blade I give to thee,
As bends the point unto the hilt,
So true my love will be."
He clasped her in last long embrace,
She fastened his mailed glove.
Then with the love light on her face,
She sang the Song of Love.

" Oh ! true as is the truest steel,
Our love may bend but never break ;
Then keep this sword for woe or weal,
To have and hold for Love's dear sake.
As is the scabbard to the blade,
As is the hand unto the glove,
We twain were for each other made :
Return ! to peaceful resting love."

The Ladye sate in armoured hall
When long, long years had past ;
Soft silent tears did slowly fall,
Sad thoughts rose thick and fast :
When hark ! was heard from castle wall
A well-remembered blast—
" He comes, who hath my heart in thrall,
He comes," she cried, " at last."
She laid his sword upon her heart,
Her hand within his glove ;
And never, never more did part
That knight from his true love.

The House that Jack Built.

By DARLEY DALE,

Author of "FAIR KATHERINE," "THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH," etc.

CHAPTER V.

JOY IS WARNED.

MR. SELSEY was not the only restless person in Oxburgh that night ; poor Perriam in vain courted sleep ; he lay awake, tossing and turning, and thinking of his Rose, until at last he could bear it no longer, so slipping out of bed he went downstairs again to his chair.

He felt ill as well as heartbroken ; his head throbbed and all his bones ached, and he thought he had taken cold. Presently he remembered he had not closed the windows in the drawing-room conservatory that evening ; the nights were still cold, and he had some tender exotics there ; he could not sleep, he might as well walk up to the hall and close them.

He did so, and to his surprise found the conservatory door wide open when he arrived, the ghosts having opened it a minute before. This was all the more odd because the windows which Perriam had come to close were shut, the squire having discovered the omission before he went to bed, and closed them himself.

Perriam walked slowly round the conservatory, thinking how weirdly beautiful his treasures looked in the moonlight, when suddenly raising his eyes, he saw two veiled figures in soft flowing drapery, walking on the gravel path towards the conservatory, bearing a coffin covered with a white and gold pall on 'their shoulders.

Now Perriam knew the story of the Oxburgh ghost, and half believed in it ; but he also fully believed that to see a ghost boded terrible evil to the beholder. He knew too that the Oxburgh ghost was considered the precursor of a death.

He was so startled that he could not move, and as the horrible

procession came nearer and nearer, his blood seemed to freeze in his veins, his teeth chattered, his grizzly grey hair stood up, his heart stopped beating; at last a horrible cry broke from his parched lips, and he fell insensible to the ground.

"Perriam! Perriam! Don't be frightened; it is only I; it is Miss Joy, your little lady. Oh, Perriam, are you hurt?" cried Joy, as she tore the muslin off her head and bent down over the prostrate figure of the gardener.

"Let me come, Joy; you have frightened the poor man into a fit, you naughty girl," said Mr. Selsey, so sternly that Joy was frightened.

"Oh! I am so sorry; I didn't know he was here. I would not have frightened Perriam for the world. Is he hurt?" cried Joy, wringing her little hands in an agony of contrition.

"Get me some water in one of the cans," said Mr. Selsey, pulling Perriam into a more comfortable position, and loosening his collar and tie.

"Pour a little gently over his face," said Mr. Selsey; and as Joy obeyed Perriam opened his eyes and murmured:

"Rose, my little Rose!"

"He will do now; stay with him while I go and get my boots and coat, Joy, and then we will give him some brandy, and I will take him home. Let him see you and hear you speak; we must try and convince him it was no ghost, if possible," said Mr. Selsey.

But Perriam seemed to have forgotten all about the ghost, he could speak of nothing but Rose, and it was clear his mind was wandering when Mr. Selsey came back.

"Now, Joy, go to bed. I will take the key of the side-door, and see Perriam home; you and I will square accounts in the morning," said Mr. Selsey, as he helped Perriam to his feet.

He had no difficulty in awaking Mrs. Perriam, for she was downstairs, wondering what had become of her husband, and inclined to be very angry with him, but Mr. Selsey stopped her.

"He is very ill, Mrs. Perriam; he has had a great shock."

"He has, indeed, sir, and so have I; but I keep in my bed like a Christian, instead of roaming the country in the dead of the night, like a lunatic; that won't mend matters. Perriam might have the sense to know that; he aint a child," said Mrs. Perriam.

"He is wandering in mind as well as in body, Mrs. Perriam; we must get him to bed at once. I'll help you, and then I'll go

for the doctor. I found him insensible in one of the conservatories just now," said Mr. Selsey, to whom the first part of Mrs. Perriam's speech was unintelligible, as he had not yet heard of Rose's elopement.

However, he did not think it necessary to tell Mrs. Perriam of the shock he was alluding to; he would tell the doctor—that would be sufficient, for he did not want to get Joy into trouble, suspecting rightly that she had only been a tool in Miss Keppel's hands.

If Joy's escapade came to the squire's ears, he would be exceedingly angry, and though Mr. Selsey was very angry himself, and intended to tell Joy so, he did not mean to inform Mr. Oxburgh of her conduct.

"I wish I had caught Miss Keppel; I would have given her such a talking to as she would not forget easily, I can tell her," he muttered to himself, as he trudged into Oxburgh for the doctor.

This was very probable; for, in the first place, as we know, the Rev. Thomas Selsey had no great liking for Miss Keppel; and in the next, one of his few faults was a hasty temper, which was aroused by her remark to Joy, counselling her to leave Perriam and fly, even more than by the trick she had played him.

The walk cured his indigestion, and his temper improved with his health, and when he rose in the morning, he was disposed to forgive Joy, though his wrath against Miss Keppel still smouldered within him.

There was a chapel in the hall in which mass was said at half-past nine every Sunday, so the Protestant members of the household breakfasted alone at nine, and had generally started for their church service before the others came out from mass. To be late on Sunday morning was considered a grave fault, because all the servants were Catholics and obliged to hear mass; so the late comers had to wait upon themselves.

Amy Keppel, however, seldom paid attention to any rules, unless they suited her convenience, so she was as usual late this Sunday morning; a fact which annoyed Mr. Selsey, for he was always most careful to observe every rule which in any way trenched upon religion when in the squire's house.

But when a few minutes later she had the effrontery to ask

him how he had slept, the little peppery man lost his temper, and his smouldering wrath burst out.

"How dare you ask me such a question? It is no thanks to you that I am not raging with brain-fever like poor Perriam, whom you frightened into it," he answered angrily.

"Tom, dear, what is the matter? Do you know you are being very rude to Amy?" asked Frances in amazement, from behind the urn.

"I beg Miss Keppel's pardon if I was rude, but I think her conscience will tell her my anger is justifiable," said Mr. Selsey, still very angry.

"My conscience tells me you are making a great fuss about a little harmless joke," said Amy, looking the picture of injured innocence, and a very lovely picture of it too.

"But, Tom, is it really true that poor Perriam has brain-fever?" said Joy, turning her great eyes, swimming with tears, on Mr. Selsey.

"Yes, Joy, it is," and he spoke so sternly that Joy's tears overflowed.

"Don't be a baby, Joy," said Amy in an undertone; and she added aloud:

"What business had Perriam to be in the conservatory in the middle of the night?"

"Quite as much business as you had," retorted Mr. Selsey, still fuming with anger.

"Really, Tom, you are incorrigible this morning. What has happened? Mr. Lockwood and I are quite in the dark about it," said Frances.

"Ask Miss Keppel; she will tell you," said Mr. Selsey, leaving the room, for his temper sometimes made him take refuge in flight.

"Miss Keppel wants her breakfast; she is not one of those dreadful people who can be brilliant so early in the day. Frances, you will hear all about it from your amiable lord and master on your way to church. Mr. Lockwood, I'll tell you the tale another time, on our way to church, perhaps. I don't mind walking as Joy does not seem well," said Miss Keppel, hoping Mr. Lockwood would take this very broad hint and offer to escort her; but Frances saw through her cousin's manœuvre and came to Joy's rescue.

"You won't have time, Amy, to walk. Joy, dear, you ought to be starting with Mr. Lockwood. Amy takes so long to dress, and she has only just begun her breakfast."

Joy blushed with pleasure as Jack opened the door for her, and following her into the hall, said, "Don't deprive me of your company ; if you do, I shall cut church this morning."

A few minutes later he and Joy passed the windows of the breakfast-room. Amy saw them, and inwardly resolved to have what she was pleased to call "her innings" before many hours had elapsed. Frances, who was watching her, thought she read her intention in her beautiful face ; but Amy, to put her off her guard, and always mindful of the cynicism that words were given us to conceal our thoughts, asked if Mr. Selsey were going to preach, knowing this topic would please Frances, who was ever ready to talk of Mr. Selsey.

They were a great contrast, these lovers. She, a tall, fine woman ; he, a little, plain man. She was placid and calm ; her expression rarely varied, she was always the same to every one—her family, her poor, her friends ; always cheerful, always amiable, always to be depended upon for sympathy and help ; a strong, wise, loving woman with no great external attractions, but one whom every one felt could be trusted implicitly ; she would never forsake a friend, she would never grow tired of her protégés.

In her Mr. Selsey had found a treasure. On the other hand, he was all fire, life, enthusiasm ; a restless, nervous temperament to whom Frances's calm nature was the greatest rest. He was impulsive ; she was prudent. He was hasty and impetuous ; she was self-controlled and sober-minded. One was the complement of the other.

There could be little doubt that their marriage would prove a happy one ; and yet the squire had some qualms about it occasionally, and often confided to his wife and Felix, his fear that Selsey would die penniless though he possessed a large fortune ; for he was a most extravagant man, spending money recklessly on his various Utopian schemes.

He came back before Amy had finished her breakfast, to apologize to Frances for having lost his temper ; and then he, Frances, Amy and Mrs. Oxburgh—the last looking very pretty in the despised new bonnet—drove to church, where they arrived before Joy and Mr. Lockwood.

These two stopped on their way to inquire for Perriam, and learnt not only that he was dangerously ill, but also that Rose had eloped with Mr. Lockwood's discharged servant the previous day.

"Poor Perriam, I am so sorry, I would not have done it for the world had I only known. Do you think he will die?" said Joy to Mr. Lockwood.

"No; and if he does, it won't be through any fault of yours. What a tender little conscience yours is; are you always so penitent for every little fault," said Mr. Lockwood, longing to kiss away the tear which trembled on Joy's long lashes.

"I don't think I am, but I am very sorry about Perriam, and I am sorry too that Tom is so angry," said Joy.

"It is Miss Keppel he is so angry with; not you."

"That is because he does not like Amy."

"Why does he dislike her?"

"I—I don't know exactly; he takes strong likes and dislikes," said Joy evasively; for she did not like to tell Mr. Lockwood why Mr. Selsey disliked her cousin.

Better for her; better for him; better—a thousand times better—for Amy, had she done so, for Jack Lockwood was not such a keen judge of character as Mr. Selsey. He saw in Amy Keppel a beautiful girl, and he was ready to believe a beautiful soul animated that beautiful body, particularly as she was very clever, and was exerting all her ability to persuade him this was so.

"I take strong likings; do you?" said Mr. Lockwood.

"Sometimes," said Joy.

"I—I have taken a very strong liking during the last few weeks; can you guess for whom?"

"For Felix?" said Joy archly.

"No; I have known Felix more than a few weeks. Guess again."

"For Amy Keppel?" questioned Joy a little anxiously, though she knew well enough whom he meant.

"No, I admire Miss Keppel; I am not sure that I like her."

"I give it up," said Joy, as they entered the churchyard, where some men and boys were loitering after the manner of villagers before the service.

"I mean you," whispered Jack; and the bright red blood mantled Joy's cheeks as she led the way up the aisle to the chancel, where she and Frances sat to lead the singing.

Jack followed her and sat by her side, much to Miss Keppel's annoyance, for she had hoped to have had him with her, and she inwardly stigmatized Joy as a forward puss for asking him into the chancel, and Frances as a designing woman for abetting her sister.

Mr. Lockwood was apparently not paying much attention to the service. On the contrary, he seemed to be devoted to Joy ; and while Miss Keppel watched them through her pretty white fingers, as she prayed to be delivered from envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, she decided she must take very active measures, and that very promptly, if she wished to supplant Joy in Mr. Lockwood's affections.

For the sermon Frances came into her mother's seat, because she liked to see Mr. Selsey's face when he was preaching ; for when it was afire with enthusiasm, all the harsh lines seemed to disappear, and in her eyes, at least, it was almost beautiful ; and even Amy allowed he looked his best in the pulpit.

He took for his text the parable of the man who built his house on the sand, and the man who built his house on the rock, applying it to the choice of a wife, and drawing two graphic pictures : one, of a man married to a beautiful, fascinating, attractive, worldly-minded girl, with nothing but her beauty to recommend her ; the other, of a man married to a girl, perhaps equally attractive, but with sterling qualities, such as truth, prudence, sympathy, underneath the external beauty.

He then pictured the trials and storms of life, the winds of fortune which all must expect to encounter, falling upon each of these houses, and depicted the man who had built his house on the rock coming out purer and stronger from them, while the man who had built his on the sand was ruined.

"Frances is the rock, and I am the sand, I suppose. Odious creature !" thought Miss Keppel.

"What a beautiful sermon !" she said, as they went out of church.

Mr. Lockwood and Joy had stolen a march on them ; they had slipped out by the chancel door, and were walking home over the fields when the others came out of church. So Amy was defeated, and had to drive home with her aunt, Mr. Selsey, and Frances, to her great annoyance.

She had her revenge, however, a little later. While Joy was

engaged with Mr. Selsey, she induced Mr. Lockwood to go for a walk in the park with her, during which she made herself so charming that he came to the conclusion she was as fascinating as she was beautiful, and about her beauty there were not two opinions.

"Now, Joy, come here; sit down there and listen to me," said Mr. Selsey, drawing Joy into the conservatory, on her return from church.

"Oh, Tom, do forgive me, please. I know it was very wrong," said Joy, looking so pretty in her penitence that Mr. Selsey could not have resisted her had he wished, though he chose to pretend to do so.

"Wrong! It was diabolically wicked! Now don't cry, Joy, or I'll give you a brotherly kiss, and you know you can't bear that," said Mr. Selsey, changing his tone, as he saw Joy looked very much distressed.

"It is poor Perriam I am thinking of the most," said Joy.

"Never mind Perriam. He would have been ill if you hadn't frightened him, Dr. Grey says. Think of me; suppose I had fainted instead of Perriam, what would you have done then?"

"Run away and left you," said Joy mischievously.

"I know better than that. Amy would, but you would not. Now look here, Joy, I don't mean to let you off too easily. I am going to have a full confession from you before I forgive you. We will conduct it as they do in the Eastern Church. I'll be the priest, and you'll be the penitent. I shall ask questions, and you'll answer them with a simple 'Yes' or 'No.' Do you understand?"

"Yes; but I am not going to answer just any questions you choose to put. I shall only answer those that refer to last night," said Joy.

"You must leave the questions to me. All you have to do is to answer. Now, did you think of this ghost trick yourself?"

"No," said Joy.

"Did it originate with Miss Keppel?"

"Yes," said Joy.

"Did it strike you it was a wrong thing to do?"

"Yes."

"Did you tell her so?"

"Yes," reluctantly.

"Did she persuade you against your conscience to go on with it?"

"Yes."

"Did she say you were a stupid little thing, and she would have nothing more to do with you unless you did it?"

"Yes."

"Did she say, 'Leave him, Joy, and fly,' when Perriam gave that shriek and fell down?"

"Yes."

"Are you very much disappointed to find I did not have a fit as well as Perriam?"

"No."

"Is Miss Keppel?"

"I don't know."

"Are you prepared to do any penance I may choose to set you?"

"No; certainly not," with decision.

"Will you promise me never to try and frighten any one again?"

"Yes."

"Very well. Now listen to me, little Joy. Amy Keppel is a dangerous woman. You take my advice, and have as little as possible to do with her. She is no true friend to you. On the contrary, she would sacrifice you to gratify her own caprices any day, and she will never do you any good. On the contrary, she leads you astray against your better judgment."

"It was not nice of her wanting me to leave poor Perriam," said Joy, on whom this had made a very unfavourable impression.

"She can do worse than that, and will if she has the chance. Come and look here," said Mr. Selsey, who had moved to the door of the conservatory.

Joy obeyed, and looking out saw her cousin and Mr. Lockwood starting off for their *tête-à-tête* across the park.

Joy blushed crimson.

"Forewarned is forearmed. Take care, Joy, and don't confide in her," said Mr. Selsey, whose warning was not unneeded, as the sequel proved.

During the next few days Amy affected a violent friendship for Joy. She would scarcely leave her side unless there was a

chance of carrying Mr. Lockwood off alone. So the consequence was, he and Joy were never alone ; while Miss Keppel, by dint of much manœuvring, succeeded in getting many a *tête-à-tête*, generally while Joy was paying Perriam a visit, which she did daily.

About a week after Rose Perriam's elopement, Mr. Lockwood had a letter summoning him home the next day.

"Must you go to-morrow ?" said Joy, when he announced his departure.

"I must indeed. The regiment is ordered to Jersey at once, and my mother would never forgive me if I did not go home for a few days before we cross."

"To Jersey ? What a long way !" said Joy wistfully.

"It only takes seven or eight hours from Weymouth now, and the colonel will always give me a few days if I want them. I can come over for some partridge shooting in September, if you will have me," said Mr. Lockwood.

"You know we will," said Joy.

"I know you are all awfully kind ; what I don't quite know, but want to know, is——"

Mr. Lockwood was alone in the drawing-room with Joy when he said this, following her about as she put the flowers she had been arranging, in their places. They were standing by a writing-table as he said the last words in a lower tone, and he was in the act of catching hold of her when Amy Keppel came in.

"Oh ! Mr. Lockwood, is it true ? Uncle John says you are going to Jersey to-morrow," she said, in a tone of pretty despair.

"I am going home to-morrow ; to Jersey next week," replied Mr. Lockwood, not grateful for the interruption.

"Oh ! how dreadful ! What shall we do without you ? Won't it be terribly dull when he is gone, Joy ?" said Amy plaintively.

"Yes," said Joy, heartily but laconically.

"And it is such a dreadful passage. I have some old aunts living there, but I never will go and stay with them on account of the passage. I consider to cross to Jersey the greatest proof of love you can give. Would you go, Joy ?" said Amy, hoping Joy would be too shy to say yes.

"If I were asked, I would," said Joy.

"Well, what are we going to do on Mr. Lockwood's last day ?" continued Amy.

"I don't know, quite. Whatever he likes," said Joy.

"Would he like to drive you and me in his dog-cart to Norwich?" said Miss Keppel sweetly.

"Very much indeed; he would be delighted," said Mr. Lockwood; and it was arranged accordingly.

Miss Keppel's motive in suggesting this programme for the afternoon was merely that she might spoil sport. She knew if left to themselves, Joy and Mr. Lockwood would probably manage to disappear for the afternoon; whereas if they went to Norwich with her they would have no opportunities for love-making.

She was not fond of driving in a dog-cart; she had once been upset, and was nervous; but with such an object in view, what sacrifice would she not make?

Mr. Lockwood's horse was very spirited, and when it was brought round that afternoon it was very fresh, not having been out the previous day.

Amy was not ready when the dog-cart was brought round to the front door, and the horse grew so restless that the groom could scarcely hold it; it arched its head, and pawed the ground, and tried to rear, till Miss Keppel, when at last she appeared, hesitated to get in.

"Where are you going to sit, Amy?" said Joy.

"Oh! in front, please," said Amy.

"Then jump in at once; the horse won't stand," said Mr. Selsey.

"Get in first, Mr. Lockwood, and take hold of the reins; I don't wish to be run away with," said Amy.

"Jump in, Lockwood; I'll put the ladies in," said Mr. Selsey, winking at Mr. Lockwood.

Mr. Lockwood got in; the horse made a little plunge forward, but finding itself held in, began to rear just as Amy was about to jump in.

"Now, Miss Keppel, be quick, please," said Mr. Selsey.

"Oh! it is rearing; I daren't get in," said Amy.

"It is only play, he wants to be off, and we are trying his patience," said Mr. Lockwood, trying to quiet his horse.

"Nonsense! get in at once," said Mr. Selsey, losing his temper.

"I daren't till the horse is quiet," said Amy.

"You are making him worse ; jump in," said Mr. Selsey.

"Do get in, Amy ; I want Tom to help me up behind," said Joy.

"I *daren't* till the horse is quiet," persisted Amy.

"Woman, you shall," said Mr. Selsey, beside himself with anger.

"Man, I won't," retorted Amy ; at which passage of arms they all burst out laughing.

"Jump up then, Joy, and be off with you ; the horse will be unmanageable directly," said Mr. Selsey, as he put the unresisting Joy into the front seat, ordered the groom to get up behind and off they drove, leaving Amy disconsolate and defeated, but by no means conquered.

It was check, but not check-mate.

Even if they came back engaged, the game was not over ; she had another move to make which would quite alter the aspect of the board, and she went away to make it.

CHAPTER VI.

AN UNDERSTANDING.

MR. LOCKWOOD'S horse started off at full gallop, and before they reached the first lodge it was beyond his control ; happily the gate was open ; but there was another gate at the far lodge which was always kept shut, and unless the horse was pulled in before they reached it, they must come to a smash.

"Are you nervous ?" said Mr. Lockwood to the girl by his side.

"No ; but if the gate is shut we are done for," said Joy.

Mr. Lockwood redoubled his efforts to regain control over his horse.

"Sit still ; there is no danger unless the gate is shut."

"We shall know directly," said Joy, and almost as she spoke the drive curved round and brought into sight the second lodge and the closed gate.

Mr. Lockwood muttered something Joy pretended not to hear, under his breath, and pulled harder than ever at the reins.

"They ought to hear us coming," he said aloud.

"The lodge is empty ; the Perriams keep the key, and Mrs.

Perriam is, of course, with poor Perriam," said Joy, wondering if some Nemesis were pursuing her.

They were still a quarter of a mile from the gate, but at the rate they were going, that meant there was about two minutes between them and a terrible accident, perhaps death.

"I may manage it, sir ; I have a key," said the groom, as he leapt off the back seat, and ran for their lives to the gate, key in hand.

He overtook the dog-cart ; he was in a line with the wheel ; he passed the shaft ; he was neck to neck with horse ; horse and man were straining every muscle, but neither could out-do the other.

"Bravo, James ! Go it, man ! Save us if you can !" cried Mr. Lockwood, as they were within a hundred yards of the gate.

Even if the groom outran the horse it was doubtful if he would have time to open the gate ; the only thing he might perhaps do would be to seize the bridle and prevent a collision by throwing the horse back on its haunches.

Just as Mr. Lockwood had given them up for lost, and was asking Joy if she dared to jump, when he gave the word, on to the sloping mossy bank on her left, a boy, who was passing, saw the horse was running away, and pulled the gate, which was happily unlocked, open from the outside only just in time, and at the imminent risk of being run over.

"Thank God !" exclaimed Joy, who was pale with fear.

"And the boy ; we won't forget him if we get back safely," said Mr. Lockwood, whose arms already began to ache with his futile efforts to pull the horse up.

"Don't talk ; it uses up your strength. I am all right. I am not a bit frightened now. Don't think of me. You have your work cut out with that horse."

"The brute ! I have," muttered Mr. Lockwood, as they dashed wildly on, faster than ever, on the wide turnpike road, between the well-trimmed fences.

"Fortunately, ours is not a hilly country. There is not a hill till just before we come to Norwich. It is a plain, straight road like this for the whole six miles," said Joy.

"The only danger is, if we meet a lumbering waggon in the middle of the road, for which they have a great liking," said Mr. Lockwood.

For the first mile they met no waggons ; only two or three

carts, and a private carriage, whose occupants all turned to gaze after the runaway horse, and to prophesy a smash. The hay-makers in the hayfields threw down their forks and rakes, and ran to look at the young couple rushing madly on in this well-appointed dog-cart.

At last the horse began to slacken his pace, and by degrees Mr. Lockwood pulled him in, just as they were about half-way from their destination ; but the driver's blood was up now the horse's was beginning to cool, and he determined to have his revenge.

"Are you tired of this, Joy?" he said ; and it was the first time he had ever called her by her Christian name.

"No ; I have enjoyed it," said Joy, with eyes sparkling from excitement.

"Then I'll punish Mr. Prince for this. He ran away three miles for his pleasure, he will run back those three for mine ; and then we will start off again," said Mr. Lockwood, turning the horse round, and driving back at a tremendous pace.

About two miles from the far lodge they met the groom, who was walking on as fast as he could to see what had become of his master.

"Jump up, James. That was well tried," said Mr. Lockwood, picking up the groom, who was depressed at his failure.

"I could not manage it, sir," said the man.

"You did your best, James ; and angels can do no more," said Joy kindly.

They drove as far as the far lodge, and then Mr. Lockwood turned the horse round again, saying he did not think he would run away again in a hurry.

Hitherto, the little conversation he and Joy had had, was exclusively about their narrow escape, and the effect the punishment would have on the horse ; and now, with a groom behind them, it was not easy to have any very private talk.

"You behaved splendidly," said Mr. Lockwood.

"Did I? I was not frightened, so it is no credit to me. It was lucky you had me instead of Amy by your side."

"It was indeed. I wish I were always as lucky. I wish I could be as lucky as that all my life," said Mr. Lockwood, glancing at the young fair face, of whose profile, with the long lashes sweeping the delicate cheek, he had a full view.

"Do you?" said Joy.

"Yes; that would be the best and sweetest joy life could give me, but I dare not ask for it yet—not for a few weeks; then I hope to be in a better position."

"Is it double pay in Jersey, then?" asked Joy.

"Oh, no. Jersey is not foreign service. It is only in India we get double pay; but our present adjutant won't go to Jersey; he is exchanging; and the colonel has promised me the adjutancy."

"And is that a good thing?"

"Yes; it is two hundred a year extra pay; that, with the little private means I have, and my pay, brings my income up to five hundred a year; little enough, but it is possible to live on it."

"It seems a good deal; but then I don't understand money. Father allows me a hundred a year; and I never spend it all; but I have not had a season in London yet. That runs away with a lot of money."

"Yes, it does. You know the colonel is very kind to me, so I am sure he will give me a week or two in September. I can hardly ask for it before; and then I shall come over to Oxburgh if you will let me?" said Mr. Lockwood, as they drove up to the house they were going to have tea at, where they had no further opportunities of conversation.

On the drive home Mr. Lockwood did not refer to the subject again. He and Joy understood each other, and he did not think it would be right to say more than he had said, until he got the adjutancy.

They did not get home till nearly seven o'clock, somewhat to the alarm of Frances and Mrs. Oxburgh, and to the secret indignation of Amy, who, however, had not been idle in their absence.

No sooner had they driven off than she went to her room and wrote the following letter to a maiden aunt living in Jersey.

Oxburgh Hall, June.

"MY DEAR AUNT SOPHY,

"You will, I know, be sorry to hear I am suffering from debility—nothing serious, but my doctor recommends me to try sea-air; so I am writing to ask if you will let me pay you my long-talked-of visit now soon. I leave here this week, but I

could come to you at the beginning of next week if that would suit you. I want to go home for a few days first, to see my doctor again.

"I am quite longing to see you and dear Aunt Dorcas and dear Auntie Lydia again. Hitherto so many things have always happened to prevent me from coming to Jersey; but I do hope very much to come to you now.

"I shall have left here by the time your answer can reach me, so please write home.

"With much love to you all,

"Ever your affectionate niece,

"AMY KEPPEL."

"There, Miss Joy, I think I have spoilt your game for you, no matter what takes place this afternoon," said Miss Keppel as she put on her hat, and admired her beautiful face in the glass, before she walked to the post office with her letter.

"If I put it in the post-bag there is the risk of Uncle John seeing it, and wondering what I am writing to Aunt Sophy about," she thought. So to obviate this she posted it herself.

She had no opportunity of any more conversation with Mr. Lockwood, who left the next day, and though she would have given much to know what had passed between him and Joy during that drive, Joy, warned by Mr. Selsey, kept her own counsel and told her nothing.

Miss Keppel was therefore left to judge from appearances; and the conclusion she arrived at from a careful study of Joy's face and manner and spirits, was that there was certainly an understanding between them.

"There will soon be a misunderstanding," thought Miss Keppel, as the squire drove her to the station, and Joy and Frances stood waving good-bye to her.

Felix and Mr. Selsey left the day after Amy did: Felix, with his father's consent, to become a doctor, since his mind was set upon it; Mr. Selsey with his wedding-day fixed for the 13th of September. It would have been earlier, but Joy had confided to Frances that Mr. Lockwood could not get leave before then, and she would not half enjoy it unless he were there.

The two men went off in excellent spirits, full of hope for the

future. The objects of their visit were gained: each had won the squire's consent to his darling wish; each now looked forward to the fulfilment of that wish—Mr. Selsey to his marriage with Frances; Felix to his life of devotion to the poor and suffering.

Both were building their houses on a rock. Mr. Selsey on the rock of a prudent, true, earthly love; Felix had soared still higher, and was building his on the Divine love.

They took with them Rose Perriam's—or rather, Rose Green's—address, intending to find her out immediately and see what could be done for her husband. They could not take with them a good account of Perriam, for he was still dangerously ill, the fever running high, and it was doubtful when that left him if he would have strength to pull through.

Joy used to go every day to see him, but at present he did not recognize her, generally taking her for Rose, about whom he raved continually; but her visits were a comfort to Mrs. Perriam, who between her two trials was quite broken down.

The house was very quiet after Amy and the three gentlemen had left, but Joy kept the others alive with her merry laugh and bright happy face. She had just had a present from her father of a fox-terrier, which she named the Captain, and which was a great source of amusement and occupation, for it took a great deal of her time to keep it out of mischief.

One day about a week after Amy left, Frances had a letter from her pretty cousin, bearing the Jersey postmark, and on opening it found Amy was in Jersey.

"How very odd!" said Frances. "She must have gone a day or two after she left here, and yet she didn't mention it."

"Amy in Jersey! Why, what has induced her to go there? I thought she had refused to go over and over again, on account of the passage," said the squire.

"I can't think. She says she wants sea-air, but she was quite well when she was here. I can't understand it," said Frances.

"I can, and I hate her," said Joy, her pretty face all aflame, and the unbidden tears starting to her eyes.

"Why, what has put my Joy out this morning?" said the squire.

Joy hung her head and did not answer, but as soon as breakfast was over she rushed up to her mother's room with the news, while Frances sat down at once to answer Amy's letter.

Poor Joy! She did not feel at liberty to tell any one, not even her mother, how far matters had gone between her and Jack Lockwood ; and yet, while she had no doubt about his love for her, young as she was, some instinct told her her fears with regard to Amy were not misplaced.

She was a very dangerous young woman, who would stop at nothing to gain her own ends and gratify her own vanity ; and Joy, little as she knew of the ways of the world, knew this. Consequently the news that Amy had gone to Jersey, where she would have the field all to herself, was torture to Joy. Like all young people who don't know what care means, she imagined no one ever yet had suffered—could or would suffer such anxiety as she was now feeling ; it haunted her by day and kept her awake at night, and the laugh of the "ringing Joy of the Hall" grew less frequent than it used to be.

(To be continued.)